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THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

Translated by

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VOLUME THE THIRD.

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MDCCLXXI.

BRITISH MUSEUM
FEB

THE

THIRTEENTH BOOK

OF THE

ODYSSEY.

THE
ARGUMENT.

The Arrival of Ulyſſes in Ithaca.

ULYSSES takes his leave of Alcinous and Arete, and embarks in the evening. Next morning the ſhip arrives at Ithaca; where the ſailors, as Ulyſſes is yet ſleeping, lay him on the ſhore with all his treaſures. On their return, Neptune changes their ſhip into a rock. In the mean-time Ulyſſes awaking, knows not his native Ithaca, by reaſon of a miſt which Pallas had caſt round him. He breaks into loud lamentations; 'till the Goddeſs appearing to him in the form of a ſhepherd, diſcovers the country to him, and points out the particular places. He then tells a feigned ſtory of his adventures, upon which ſhe maniſeſts herſelf, and they conſult together of the meaſures to be taken to deſtroy the ſuitors. To conceal his return, and diſguiſe his perſon the more effectually, ſhe changes him into the figure of an old beggar.

THE

THIRTEENTH BOOK

OF THE

ODYSSEY.

He ceas'd; but left ſo pleaſing on their ear
His voice, that liſt'ning ſtill they ſeem'd to hear.
A pauſe of ſilence huſh'd the ſhady rooms:
The grateful conf'rence then the king reſumes.
Whatever toils the great Ulyſſes paſt,
Beneath this happy roof they end at laſt;

v. 3. — — *The ſhady rooms.*] The epithet in the original is Σκιόεντα, or *gloomy*: it is here uſed with a peculiar propriety, to keep in the reader's mind the exact time when Ulyſſes made his narration to the Phæacians, namely, in the evening of the thirty-third day: we may likewiſe gather from this diſtinction of times, the exact ſtay of Ulyſſes among the Phæacians; he was thrown upon their ſhores on the thirty-firſt day in the evening, and lands about day-break on the thirty-fifth day in his own country; ſo that he ſtayed three nights only with Alcinous, one night being ſpent in his voyage to Ithaca from Phæacia.

No longer now from ſhore to ſhore to roam,
Smooth ſeas, and gentle winds invite him home.
But hear me, princes! whom theſe walls incloſe,
For whom my chanter ſings, and goblet flows
With wine unmixt, (an honour due to age,
To chear the grave, and warm the poet's rage)
Tho' labour'd gold and many a dazzling veſt
Lie heap'd already for our god-like gueſt;
Without new treaſures let him not remove,
Large, and expreſſive of the publick love:
Each peer a tripod, each a vaſe beſtow,
A gen'ral tribute, which the ſtate ſhall owe.
This ſentence pleas'd: then all their ſteps addreſt
To ſep'rate manſions, and retir'd to reſt.
Now did the roſy-finger'd morn ariſe,
And ſhed her ſacred light along the ſkies.
Down to the haven and the ſhips in haſte
They bore the treaſures, and in ſafety plac'd.

v. 10. *For whom my chanter ſings, and goblet flows*
With wine unmixt, &c.]

Homer calls the wine γερούσιον, or wine drank at the entertainment of elders, γερόντων, or men of diſtinction, ſays Euſtathius; by the bard, he means Demodocus.

The ſame critick further remarks, that Homer judiciouſly ſhortens every circumſtance before he comes to the diſmiſſion of Ulyſſes: thus he omits the deſcription of the ſacrifice, and the ſubject of the ſong of Demodocus; theſe are circumſtances that at beſt would be but uſeleſs ornaments, and ill agree with the impatience of Ulyſſes to begin his voyage toward his country. Theſe therefore the poet briefly diſpatches.

The king himſelf the vaſes rang'd with care:
Then bade his followers to the feaſt repair.
A victim ox beneath the ſacred hand
Of great Alcinous falls, and ſtains the ſand.
To Jove th' Eternal, (Pow'r above all Pow'rs!
Who wings the winds, and darkens heav'n with ſhow'rs)
The flames aſcend: till evening they prolong
The rites, more ſacred made by heav'nly ſong:
For in the midſt, with publick honours grac'd,
Thy lyre divine, Demodocus! was plac'd;
All, but Ulyſſes, heard with fixt delight:
He ſat, and ey'd the ſun, and wiſh'd the night;
Slow ſeem'd the ſun to move, the hours to roll,
His native home deep-imag'd in his ſoul.
As the tir'd ploughman ſpent with ſtubborn toil,
Whoſe oxen long have torn the furrow'd ſoil,

v. 39. *As the tir'd ploughman*, &c.] The ſimile which Homer chuſes is drawn from low life, but very happily ſets off the impatience of Ulyſſes: it is familiar, but expreſſive. Horace was not of the judgment of thoſe who thought it mean, for he uſes it in his epiſtles.

" — — — — dieſque
" Longa videtur opus debentibus: ut piger annus
" Pupillis, quos dura premit cuſtodia matrum;
" Sic mihi tarda fluunt, ingrataque tempora, quæ
" ſpem
" Conſiliumque morantur, &c.

It was neceſſary to dwell upon this impatience of Ulyſſes to return: it would have been abſurd to have repreſented

Sees with delight the ſun's declining ray,
When home with feeble knees, he bends his way
To late repaſt, (the day's hard labour done:)
So to Ulyſſes welcome ſet the ſun,
Then inſtant, to Alcinous and the reſt,
(The Scherian ſtates) he turn'd, and thus addreſt.

O thou, the firſt in merit and command!
And you the peers and princes of the land!
May ev'ry joy be yours! nor this the leaſt,
When due libation ſhall have crown'd the feaſt,
Safe to my home to ſend your happy gueſt.
Compleat are now the bounties you have giv'n,
Be all thoſe bounties but confirm'd by Heav'n!
So may I find, when all my wand'rings ceaſe,
My conſort blameleſs, and my friends in peace.

him cool, or even moderately warm upon this occaſion; he had refuſed immortality through the love of his country; it is now in his power to return to it; he ought therefore conſiſtently with his former character to be drawn with the utmoſt earneſtneſs of ſoul, and every moment muſt appear tedious that keeps him from it; it ſhews therefore the judgment of Homer to deſcribe him in this manner, and not to paſs it over curſorily, but force it upon the notice of the reader, by inſiſting upon it ſomewhat largely, and illuſtrating it by a proper ſimilitude, to fix it more ſtrongly upon our memory.

v. 53. *Be all thoſe bounties but confirm'd by Heav'n!*] This is a pious and inſtructive ſentence, and teaches, that though riches were heaped upon us with the greateſt abundance and ſuperfluity; yet unleſs Heaven adds its benediction, they will prove but at beſt a burden and calamity.

On you be ev'ry bliſs; and ev'ry day,
In home-felt joys delighted, roll away;
Yourſelves, your wives, your long-deſcending race,
May ev'ry God enrich with ev'ry grace!
Sure fixt on virtue may your nation ſtand,
And publick evil never touch the land!
His words well weigh'd, the gen'ral voice approv'd
Benign, and inſtant his diſmiſſion mov'd.
The monarch to Pontonous gave the ſign,
To fill the goblet high with roſy wine:
Great Jove the Father, firſt (he cry'd) implore;
Then ſend the ſtranger to his native ſhore.
The luſcious wine th' obedient herald brought;
Around the manſion flow'd the purple draught:
Each from his ſeat to each immortal pours,
Whom glory circles in th' Olympian bow'rs.
Ulyſſes ſole with air majeſtick ſtands,
The bowl preſenting to Arete's hands;

v. 73. *The bowl preſenting to Arete's hands;*
Then thus — — — —

It may be aſked why Ulyſſes addreſſes his words to the queen rather than the king: the reaſon is, becauſe ſhe was his patroneſs, and had firſt received him with hoſpitality, as appears from the ſeventh book of the Odyſſey.

Ulyſſes makes a libation to the Gods, and preſents the bowl to the queen: this was the pious practice of antiquity upon all ſolemn occaſions: Ulyſſes here does it, becauſe he is to undertake a voyage, and it implies a prayer for the proſperity of it. The reaſon why he preſents the bowl to the queen is, that ſhe may firſt drink out of it, for

Then thus: O Queen farewel! be ſtill poſſeſt
Of dear remembrance, bleſſing ſtill and bleſt!
'Till age and death ſhall gently call thee hence,
(Sure fate of ev'ry mortal excellence!)
Farewel! and joys ſucceſſive ever ſpring
To thee, to thine, the people, and the king!

Thus he; then parting prints the ſandy ſhore
To the fair port: a herald march'd before,
Sent by Alcinous; of Arete's train
Three choſen maids attend him to the main;
This does a tunick and white veſt convey,
A various caſket that, of rich inlay,
And bread and wine the third. The chearful mates
Safe in the hollow poop diſpoſe the cates:
Upon the deck ſoft painted robes they ſpread,
With linen cover'd for the hero's bed.
He clim'd the lofty ſtern! then gently preſt
The ſwelling couch, and lay compos'd to reſt.

Now plac'd in order, the Phæacian train
Their cables looſe, and lanch into the main:
At once they bend, and ſtrike their equal oars,
And leave the ſinking hills, and leſſ'ning ſhores.
While on the deck the chief in ſilence lies,
And pleaſing ſlumbers ſteal upon his eyes.

ſo προπίνειν properly and originally ſignifies, τὸ πρὸ ἑαυτοῦ διδόναι τινὶ πίνειν, ſays Euſtathius. *Propino* is uſed differently by the Romans.

As fiery courſers in the rapid race
Urg'd by fierce drivers thro the duſty ſpace,

v. 98. *As fiery courſers in the rapid race—*
Toſs their high heads, &c.]

The poet introduces two ſimilitudes to repreſent the ſailing of the Phæacian veſſel: the former deſcribes the motion of it, as it bounds and riſes over the waves, like horſes toſſing their heads in a race; and alſo the ſteadineſs of it, in that it ſails with as much firmneſs over the billows, as horſes tread upon the ground. The latter compariſon is ſolely to ſhew the ſwiftneſs of the veſſel.

The word in the original is τελεάορροι; an inſtance, that four horſes were ſometimes joined to the chariot. Virgil has borrowed this compariſon, Æn. v.

" Non tam præcipites bijugo certamine campum
" Corripuere, ruuntque effuſi carcere currus,
" Nec ſic immiſis aurigæ undantia lora
" Concuſſere jugis, pronique in verbera pendent."

It muſt be allowed that nothing was ever more happily executed than this deſcription, and the copy far exceeds the original. Macrobius, Saturnal. lib. v. gives this as his opinion, and his reaſons for it. The Greek poet (ſays that author) paints only the ſwiftneſs of the horſes when ſcourged by the driver; Virgil adds, the ruſhing of the chariot, the fields as it were devoured by the rapidity of the horſes; we ſee the throwing up of the reins, in *undantia lora*: and the attitude of the driver, leaning forward in the act of laſhing of the horſes, in the words, *Pronique in verbera pendent.* It is true, nothing could be added more elegantly than the ὑψοῦ ἀειρόμενοι, in Homer; it paints at once the ſwiftneſs of the race, and the riſing poſture of the horſes in the act of running; but Virgil is more copious, and has omitted no circumſtance, and ſet the whole

Toſs their high heads, and ſcour along the plain;
So mounts the bounding veſſel o'er the main.
Back to the ſtern the parted billows flow,
And the black ocean foams and roars below.
Thus with ſpread ſails the winged galley flies;
Leſs ſwift an eagle cuts the liquid ſkies;
Divine Ulyſſes was her ſacred load,
A man, in wiſdom equal to a God!
Much danger, long and mighty toils he bore,
In ſtorms by ſea, and combats on the ſhore:
All which ſoft ſleep now baniſh'd from his breaſt,
Wrapt in a pleaſing, deep, and death-like reſt.
But when the morning ſtar with early ray
Flam'd in the front of heav'n, and promis'd day;

race fully before our eyes; we may add, that the verſification is as beautiful as the deſcription compleat; every ear muſt be ſenſible of it.

I will only further obſerve the judgment of Homer in ſpeaking of every perſon in his particular character. When a vain-glorious Phæacian deſcribed the ſailing of his own veſſels, they were ſwift as thought, and endued with reaſon; when Homer ſpeaks in his own perſon to his readers, they are ſaid only to be ſwift as hawks or horſes: Homer ſpeaks like a poet, with ſome degree of amplification, but not with ſo much hyperbole as Alcinous. No people ſpeak ſo fondly as ſailors of their own ſhips to this day, and particularly are ſtill apt to talk of them as of living creatures.

v. 112. *But when the morning ſtar with early ray*
Flam'd in the front of heav'n — —]

From this paſſage we may gather, that Ithaca is diſtant from Corcyra or Phæacia no farther than a veſſel ſails in

Like diſtant clouds the mariner deſcries
Fair Ithaca's emerging hills ariſe.
Far from the town a ſpacious port appears,
Sacred to Phorcys' pow'r, whoſe name it bears:
Two craggy rocks projecting to the main,
The roaring wind's tempeſtuous rage reſtrain;

the compaſs of one night; and this agrees with the real diſtance between thoſe iſlands; an inſtance that Homer was well acquainted with geography: this is the morning of the thirty-fifth day.

v. 116. —— *A ſpacious port appears,*
Sacred to Phorcys' ——]

Phorcys was the ſon of Pontus and Terra, according to Heſiod's genealogy of the Gods: this haven is ſaid to be ſacred to that Deity, becauſe he had a temple near it, from whence it received its appellation.

The whole voyage of Ulyſſes to his country, and indeed the whole Odyſſey, has been turned into allegory; which I will lay before the reader as an inſtance of a trifling induſtry and ſtrong imagination. Ulyſſes is in ſearch of true felicity, the Ithaca and Penelope of Homer: he runs through many difficulties and dangers; this ſhews that happineſs is not to be attained without labour and afflictions. He has ſeveral companions, who periſh by their vices, and he alone eſcapes by the aſſiſtance of the Phæacians, and is tranſported in his ſleep to his country; that is, the Phæacians, whoſe name implies blackneſs, φαιὸς, are the mourners at his death, and attend him to his grave: the ſhip is his grave, which is afterwards turned into a rock; which repreſents his monumental marble; his ſleep means death, through which alone man arrives at eternal felicity. *Spondanus.*

Within, the waves in ſofter murmurs glide,
And ſhips ſecure without their halſers ride,
High at the head a branching olive grows,
And crowns the pointed cliffs with ſhady boughs.
Beneath a gloomy grotto's cool receſs
Delights the Nereids of the neighb'ring ſeas;

v. 124. — — *a gloomy grotto's cool receſs.*] Porphyry has wrote a volume to explain this cave of the Nymphs, with more piety perhaps than judgment; and another perſon has perverted it into the utmoſt obſcenity, and both allegorically. Porphyry (obſerves Euſtathius) is of opinion, that the cave means the world; it is called gloomy, but agreeable, becauſe it was made out of darkneſs, and afterwards ſet in this agreeable order by the hand of the Deity. It is conſecrated to the Nymphs; that is, it is deſtined to the habitation of ſpiritual ſubſtances united to the body: the bowls and urns of living ſtone, are the bodies which are formed out of the earth; the bees that make their honey in the cave are the ſouls of men, which perform all their operations in the body, and animate it; the beams on which the Nymphs roll their webs, are the bones over which the admirable embroidery of nerves, veins and arteries are ſpread; the fountains which water the cave are the ſeas, rivers and lakes that water the world; and the two gates, are the two poles; through the northern the ſouls deſcend from heaven to animate the body, through the ſouthern they aſcend to heaven, after they are ſeparated from the body by death. But I confeſs I ſhould rather chuſe to underſtand the deſcription poetically, believing that Homer never dreamed of theſe matters, though the age in which he flouriſhed was addicted to allegory. How often do painters draw from the imagination only, merely to pleaſe the eye? And why might not Homer write after it, eſpecially in this place where he manifeſtly indulges his fancy, while he brings his hero to the firſt dawning of

Where bowls and urns were form'd of living ſtone,
And maſſy beams in native marble ſhone;
On which the labours of the nymphs were roll'd,
Their webs divine of purple mix'd with gold.
Within the cave the cluſt'ring bees attend
Their waxen works, or from the roof depend.
Perpetual waters o'er the pavement glide;
Two marble doors unfold on either ſide;
Sacred the ſouth, by which the Gods deſcend,
But mortals enter at the northern end.

happineſs? He has long dwelt upon a ſeries of horrours, and his imagination being tired with the melancholy ſtory, it is not impoſſible but his ſpirit might be enlivened with the ſubject while he wrote, and this might lead him to indulge his fancy in a wonderful, and perhaps fabulous deſcription. In ſhort, I ſhould much rather chuſe to believe that the memory of the things to which he alludes in the deſcription of the cave is loſt, than credit ſuch a laboured and diſtant allegory.

v. 134. *Sacred the ſouth, by which the Gods deſcend.*] Virgil has imitated the deſcription of this haven, Æn. lib. i.

" Eſt in ſeceſſu longo locus, inſula portum
" Efficit, objectu laterum, quibus omnis ab alto
" Frangitur," &c. — —

Within a long receſs there lies a bay,
An iſland ſhades it from the rolling ſea,
And forms a port ſecure for ſhips to ride,
Broke by the jutting land on either ſide,
In double ſtreams the briny waters glide.
Betwixt two rows of rocks, a ſilvan ſcene
Appears above, and groves for ever green;

Thither they bent, and haul'd their ſhip to land,
(The crooked keel divides the yellow ſand)

A grot is form'd beneath with moſſy ſeats,
To reſt the Nereids, and exclude the heats;
Down from the crannies of the living walls
The cryſtal ſtreams deſcend in murmuring falls,
No halſers need to bind the veſſels here.
Nor bearded anchors, for no ſtorms they fear.
Dryden.

Scaliger infinitely prefers the Roman poet: Homer, ſays he, ſpeaks *humilia humiliter, Virgilius grandiora magnifice*; but what I would chiefly obſerve is, not what Virgil has imitated, but what he has omitted; namely, all that ſeems odd, or leſs intelligible; I mean the works of the bees in a cave ſo damp and moiſt; and the two gates through which the Gods and men enter.

I ſhall offer a conjecture to explain theſe two lines:

Sacred the ſouth, by which the Gods deſcend,
But mortals enter at the northern end.

It has already been obſerved, that the Æthiopians held an annual ſacrifice of twelve days to the Gods: all that time they carried all their images in proceſſion, and placed them at their feſtivals, and for this reaſon the Gods were ſaid to feaſt with the Æthiopians; that is, they were preſent with them by their ſtatues: thus alſo Themis was ſaid to form or diſſolve aſſemblies, becauſe they carried her image to the aſſemblies when they were convened, and when they were broken up they carried it away. Now we have already remarked, that this port was ſacred to Phorcys, becauſe he had a temple by it: it may not then be impoſſible, but that this temple having two doors, they might carry the ſtatues of the Gods in their proceſſions through the ſouthern gate, which might be conſecrated to this uſe only, and the populace be forbid to enter by it:

Ulyſſes ſleeping on his couch they bore,
And gently plac'd him on the rocky ſhore.

for that reaſon the Deities were ſaid to enter, namely, by their images. As the other gate being allotted to common uſe, was ſaid to be the paſſage for mortals.

v. 138. *Ulyſſes ſleeping on his couch they bore,*
And gently plac'd him on the rocky ſhore.]

There is nothing in the whole Odyſſey that more ſhocks our reaſon than the expoſing Ulyſſes aſleep on the ſhore by the Phæacians. "The paſſage (ſays Ariſtotle in his Poeticks) where "Ulyſſes is landed in Ithaca, is ſo full of "abſurdities, that they would be intolerable in a bad "poet; but Homer has concealed them under an infinity "of admirable beauties, with which he has adorned all "that part of the Odyſſey; theſe he has crowded toge-"ther, as ſo many charms to hinder our perceiving the "defects of the ſtory." Ariſtotle muſt be allowed to ſpeak with great judgment; for what probability is there that a man ſo prudent as Ulyſſes, who was alone in a veſſel at the diſcretion of ſtrangers, ſhould ſleep ſo ſoundly, as to be taken out of it, carried with all his baggage on ſhore, and the Phæacians ſhould ſet ſail, and he never awake? This is ſtill more abſurd, if we remember that Ulyſſes has his ſoul ſo ſtrongly bent upon his country; is it then poſſible, that he could be thus ſunk into a lethargy, in the moment when he arrives at it? "Howe-"ver (ſays Monſ. Dacier in his reflections upon Ariſtotle's "Poeticks) Homer was not aſhamed of that abſurdity, "but not being able to omit it, he uſed it to give proba-"bility to the ſucceeding ſtory: it was neceſſary for Ulyſ-"ſes to land alone, in order to his concealment: if he "had been diſcovered, the ſuitors would immediately "have deſtroyed him, if not as the real Ulyſſes, yet under

His treaſures next, Alcinous' gifts, they laid
In the wild olive's unfrequented ſhade,

" the pretext of his being an impoſtor; they would then
" have ſeized his dominions, and married Penelope: now
" if he had been waked, the Phæacians would have been
" obliged to have attended him, which he could not have
" denied with decency, nor accepted with ſafety: Homer
" therefore had no other way left to unravel his fable hap-
" pily: but he knew what was abſurd in this method,
" and uſes means to hide it; he laviſhes out all his wit
" and addreſs, and lays together ſuch an abundance of
" admirable poetry, that the mind of the reader is ſo
" inchanted, that he perceives not the defect; he is like
" Ulyſſes lulled aſleep, and knows no more than that hero,
" how he comes there. That great poet firſt deſcribes the
" ceremony of Ulyſſes taking leave of Alcinous and his
" queen Arete; then he ſets off the ſwiftneſs of the veſſel
" by two beautiful compariſons; he deſcribes the haven
" with great exactneſs, and adds to it the deſcription of
" the cave of the Nymphs; this laſt aſtoniſhes the reader,
" and he is ſo intent upon it, that he has no attention
" to conſider the abſurdity in the manner of Ulyſſes's
" landing: in this moment when he perceives the mind
" of the reader as it were intoxicated with theſe beauties,
" he ſteals Ulyſſes on ſhore, and diſmiſſes the Phæacians;
" all this takes up but eight verſes. And then, leſt the
" reader ſhould reflect upon it, he immediately introduces
" the Deities, and gives us a dialogue between Jupiter
" and Neptune. This keeps up ſtill our wonder, and
" our reaſon has not time to deliberate; and when the
" dialogue is ended, a ſecond wonder ſucceeds, the bark
" is transformed into a rock: this is done in the ſight of
" the Phæacians, by which method the poet carries us a
" while from the conſideration of Ulyſſes, by removing
" the ſcene to a diſtant iſland; there he detains us till

Secure from theft: then lanch'd the bark again,
Reſum'd their oars, and meaſur'd back the main.

" we may be ſuppoſed to have forgot the paſt abſurdi-
" ties, by relating the aſtoniſhment of Alcinous at the
" ſight of the prodigy, and offering up to Neptune, to ap-
" peaſe his anger, a ſacrifice of twelve bulls. Then he
" returns to Ulyſſes who now wakes, and not knowing
" the place where he was, (becauſe Minerva made all
" things appear in a diſguiſed view) he complains of his
" misfortunes, and accuſes the Phæacians of infidelity;
" at length Minerva comes to him in the ſhape of a young
" ſhepherd, &c. Thus this abſurdity, which appears in
" the fable when examined alone, is hidden by the beau-
" ties that ſurround it; this paſſage is more adorned
" with fiction, and more wrought up with a variety of
" poetical ornaments than moſt other places of the Odyſ-
" ſey. From hence Ariſtotle makes an excellent obſer-
" vation. All efforts imaginable (ſays that author) ought
" to be made to form the fable rightly from the begin-
" ning; but if it ſo happen that ſome places muſt neceſ-
" ſarily appear abſurd, they muſt be admitted, eſpecially
" if they contribute to render the reſt more probable;
" but the poet ought to reſerve all the ornaments of dic-
" tion for theſe weak parts: the places that have either
" ſhining ſentiments or manners have no occaſion for
" them, a dazzling expreſſion rather damages them, and
" ſerves only to eclipſe their beauty."

v. 142. —— *Then lanch'd the bark again.*] This voluntary and unexpected return of the Phæacians, and their landing Ulyſſes in his ſleep, ſeems as unaccountable on the part of the Phæacians as of Ulyſſes: for what can be more abſurd than to ſee them expoſing a king and his effects upon the ſhores without his knowledge, aud flying away ſecretly as from an enemy? Having therefore in the pre-

Nor yet forgot old ocean's dread Supreme
The vengeance vow'd for eyeleſs Polypheme. 145

ceding note ſhewed what the criticks ſay in condemnation of Homer, it is but juſtice to lay together what they ſay in his defence.

That the Phæacians ſhould fly away in ſecret is no wonder: Ulyſſes had through the whole courſe of the eleventh book, (particularly by the mouth of the prophet Tireſias) told the Phæacians that the ſuitors plotted his deſtruction; and therefore the mariners might very reaſonably be apprehenſive that the ſuitors would uſe any perſons as enemies, who ſhould contribute to reſtore Ulyſſes to his country. It was therefore neceſſary that they ſhould ſail away without any ſtay upon the Ithacan ſhores. This is the reaſon why they made this voyage by night; namely to avoid diſcovery; and it was as neceſſary to return immediately, that is, juſt at the appearance of day, before people were abroad, that they might eſcape obſervation.

Euſtathius remarks, that the Phæacians were an unwarlike nation, or as it is expreſſed by a Phæacian,

οὔ γὰρ φαιήκεσσι μέλει βιὸς, οὐδὲ φαρέτρη,

and therefore they were afraid to teach any perſons the way to their own country, by diſcovering the courſe of navigation to it; for this reaſon they begin their voyage to Ithaca by night, land Ulyſſes without waking him, and return at the appearance of day-light, that they might not ſhew what courſe was to be ſteered to come to the Phæacian ſhores.

Plutarch in his treatiſe of Reading the Poets, tells us, that there is a tradition among the Tuſcans, that Ulyſſes was naturally *drowſy*, and a perſon that could not eaſily be converſed with, by reaſon of that *ſleepy* diſpoſition. But perhaps this might be only artful in a man of ſo great wiſdom, and ſo great diſguiſe or diſſimulation: he was ſlow

Before the throne of mighty Jove he ſtood;
And ſought the ſecret counſels of the God.

to give anſwers when he had no mind to give any at all: though indeed it muſt be confeſſed, that this tradition is countenanced by his behaviour in the Odyſſey, or rather may be only a ſtory formed from it: his greateſt calamities riſe from his *ſleeping*: when he was ready to land upon his own country by the favour of Æolus, he falls *aſleep*, and his companions let looſe a wind that bears him from it: he is *aſleep* while they kill the oxen of Apollo; and here he ſleeps while he is landed upon his own country. It might perhaps be this conduct in Homer, that gave Horace the hint to ſay,

" — — Aliquando bonus *dormitat* Homerus."

Implying, that when Homer was at a loſs to bring any difficult matter to an iſſue, he immediately laid his hero *aſleep*, and this ſolved all the difficulty; as in the abovementioned inſtances.

Plutarch is of opinion, that this *ſleep* of Ulyſſes was feigned: and that he made uſe of the pretence of a *natural infirmity*, to conceal the ſtraights he was in at that time in his thoughts; being aſhamed to diſmiſs the Phæacians without entertainment and gifts of hoſpitality; and afraid of being diſcovered by the ſuitors, if he entertained ſuch a multitude; therefore to avoid both theſe difficulties, he feigns a ſleep while they land him, till they ſail away.

Euſtathius agrees with Plutarch in the main, and adds another reaſon why the Phæacians land Ulyſſes ſleeping; namely, becauſe they were aſhamed to wake him, leſt he ſhould think they did it out of avarice, and expectation of a reward for bringing him to his own country.

I will only add, that there might be a natural reaſon for the ſleep of Ulyſſes; we are to remember that this is a voyage in the night, the ſeaſon of repoſe: and his ſpirits

Shall then no more, O Sire of Gods! be mine
The rights and honours of a Pow'r divine?
Scorn'd ev'n by man, and (oh ſevere diſgrace)
By ſoft Phæacians, my degenerate race!
Againſt yon' deſtin'd head in vain I ſwore,
And menac'd vengeance, ere he reach'd his ſhore;
To reach his natal ſhore was thy decree;
Mild I obey'd, for who ſhall war with thee?

having been long agitated and fatigued by his calamities, might upon his peace of mind at the return to his country, ſettle into a deep calmneſs and tranquillity, and ſo ſink him into a deep ſleep; Homer himſelf ſeems to give this as a reaſon of it in the following lines:

> Much danger, long and mighty toils he bore,
> In ſtorms by ſea, and combats on the ſhore;
> All which ſoft ſleep now baniſh'd from his breaſt,
> Wrapt in a pleaſing, deep, and death-like reſt.

It muſt be allowed that the laſt line admirably paves the way for the following account; and the poet undoubtedly inſerted it, to prevent our ſurpriſe at the manner of his being ſet on ſhore, by calling his ſleep

— — a pleaſing, deep, and death-like reſt.

How far a wiſe man is obliged to reſiſt the calls of nature, I leave to the diſcuſſion of philoſophers; thoſe of ſleep are no more to be reſiſted, than thoſe of thirſt or hunger. But yet I confeſs Ulyſſes yielded unſeaſonably, and the ſtrong paſſion and love for his country that ſo fully poſſeſſed his ſoul, ſhould have given him a few hours of vigilance, when he was ready to ſee it after an abſence of almoſt twenty years.

Behold him landed, careleſs and aſleep,
From all th' eluded dangers of the deep!
Lo where he lies, amidſt a ſhining ſtore
Of braſs, rich garments, and refulgent ore:
And bears triumphant to his native iſle
A prize more worth than Ilion's noble ſpoil.
To whom the Father of th' immortal Pow'rs,
Who ſwells the clouds, and gladdens earth with ſhow'rs.
Can mighty Neptune thus of man complain!
Neptune, tremendous o'er the boundleſs main!
Rever'd and awful ev'n in heav'n's abodes,
Antient and great! a God above the Gods!
If that low race offend thy pow'r divine,
(Weak, daring creatures!) is not vengeance thine?
Go then, the guilty at thy will chaſtiſe.
He ſaid: the Shaker of the earth replies.
This then I doom; to fix the gallant ſhip
A mark of vengeance on the ſable deep:

v. 172. *This then I doom; to fix the gallant ſhip*
A mark of vengeance — —
And roots her down, an everlaſting rock.]

I refer the reader to the eighth book of the Odyſſey, for a further account of this transformation. Scaliger condemns it, *Ulyſſis navis in ſaxum mutatur a Neptuno, ut immortalem faciat, quem odio habere debuit.* But will it not be an anſwer to ſay, that it is an immortal monument of the vengeance and power of Neptune, and that whenever the ſtory of the veſſel was mentioned, the puniſhment likewiſe muſt be remembered in honour of that Deity?

To warn the thoughtleſs ſelf-confiding train.
No more unlicens'd thus to brave the main.

Some are of opinion, that it is a phyſical allegory, and that Homer delivers the opinion of the ancients concerning the tranſmutation of one ſpecies into another, as wood into ſtone, by water, that is, by Neptune the God of it; according to thoſe lines of Ovid,

" Flumen habent Cicones, quod potum ſaxea reddit
" Viſcera, quod tactis inducit marmora rebus."

But perhaps this is only one of thoſe marvellous fictions written after the taſte of antiquity, which delighted in wonders, and which the nature of Epick Poetry allows. " The marvellous (ſays Ariſtotle in his Poeticks) ought " to take place in tragedy, but much more in the epick, " in which it proceeds even to the extravagant; for the " marvellous is always agreeable; and a proof of it is, " that thoſe who relate any thing, generally add ſome- " thing to the truth of it, that it may better pleaſe thoſe " who hear it. Homer (continues he) is the man who " has given the beſt inſtructions to other poets how to tell " lies agreeably." Horace is of the ſame opinion.

" Atque ita mentitur, ſic veris falſa remiſcet,
" Primo ne medium, medio ne diſcrepet imum."

However, we muſt not think that Ariſtotle adviſes poets to put things evidently falſe and impoſſible into their poems, or gives them licenſe to run out into wildneſs; he only means (as Monſ. Dacier obſerves) that the wonderful ſhould exceed the probable, but not deſtroy it; and this will be effected, if the poet has the addreſs to prepare the reader, and to lead him by a probable train of things that depend on miracle, to the miracle itſelf, and reconcile him to it by degrees, ſo that his reaſon does not perceive, at leaſt is not ſhocked at the illuſion: thus for inſtance,

Full in their port a ſhady hill ſhall riſe,
If ſuch thy will.—We will it, Jove replies.
Ev'n when with tranſport black'ning all the ſtrand,
The ſwarming people hail their ſhip to land,
Fix her for ever, a memorial ſtone:
Still let her ſeem to ſail, and ſeem alone;
The trembling crouds ſhall ſee the ſudden ſhade
Of whelming mountains overhang their head!
With that, the God whoſe earthquakes rock the ground,
Fierce to Phæacia croſt the vaſt profound.
Swift as a ſwallow ſweeps the liquid way,
The winged pinnace ſhot along the ſea.
The God arreſts her with a ſudden ſtroke,
And roots her down an everlaſting rock.

Homer puts this transformation into the hands of a Deity? He prepares us for it in the eighth book, he gives us the reaſon of the transformation; namely, the anger of Neptune; and at laſt he brings in Jupiter aſſenting to it. This is the method Homer takes to reconcile it to probability. Virgil undoubtedly thought it a beauty: for, after Homer's example, he gives us a transformation of the ſhips of Æneas into ſea-nymphs.

I have already remarked from Boſſu, that ſuch miracles as theſe ought not to be too frequent in an epick poem; all the machines that require divine probability ought to be ſo detached from the action of the poem, that they may be retrenched from it, without deſtroying the action: thoſe that are eſſential to the action, ought to be founded upon human probability. Thus if we take away this transformation, there is no chaſm; and it in no way affects the integrity of the action.

Aghaſt the Scherians ſtand in deep ſurpriſe;
All preſs to ſpeak, all queſtion with their eyes.
What hands unſeen the rapid bark reſtrain!
And yet it ſwims, or ſeems to ſwim, the main!
Thus they, unconſcious of the deed divine:
'Till great Alcinous riſing own'd the ſign.
Behold the long predeſtin'd day! (he cries)
Oh certain faith of antient prophecies!
Theſe ears have heard my royal ſire diſcloſe
A dreadful ſtory, big with future woes;
How mov'd with wrath, that careleſs we convey
Promiſcuous ev'ry gueſt to ev'ry bay,
Stern Neptune rag'd; and how by his command
Firm rooted in the ſurge a ſhip ſhould ſtand;
(A monument of wrath) and mound on mound
Shou'd hide our walls, or whelm beneath the ground.
The Fates have follow'd as declar'd the ſeer.
Be humbled, nations! and your monarch hear.
No more unlicens'd brave the deeps, no more
With ev'ry ſtranger paſs from ſhore to ſhore;
On angry Neptune now for mercy call:
To his high name let twelve black oxen fall.
So may the God reverſe his purpos'd will,
Nor o'er our city hang the dreadful hill.
The monarch ſpoke: they trembled and obey'd,
Forth on the ſands the victim oxen led:

v. 112. *So may the God reverſe his purpos'd will.*] This agrees with what Homer writes in a former part of the Odyſſey.

The gather'd tribes before the altars ſtand,
And chiefs and rulers a majeſtick band.
The King of Ocean all the tribes implore;
The blazing altars redden all the ſhore.
Meanwhile Ulyſſes in his country lay,
Releas'd from ſleep, and round him might ſurvey
The ſolitary ſhore, and rolling ſea.
Yet had his mind thro' tedious abſence loſt
The dear remembrance of his native coaſt;

— — τρεπτοὶ δὲ θεοὶ αὐτοί.

That the Gods themſelves may be prevailed upon to change their anger by prayer: a ſentiment agreeable to true religion. Homer does not tell us that the laſt denunciation of covering the town with a mountain was fulfilled: it is probable that it was averted by the piety of Alcinous. But (as Euſtathius obſerves) it was artful in the poet to leave this point doubtful, to avoid detection in deviating from true hiſtory; for ſhould poſterity enquire where this land of the Phæacians lay, it would be found to be Corfu of the Venetians, and not covered with any mountain; but ſhould this city have happened to have been utterly aboliſhed by time, and ſo loſt to poſterity, it would have agreed with the relation of Homer, who leaves room to ſuppoſe it deſtroyed by Neptune. But how could Neptune be ſaid to cover it with a mountain? Had not an inundation been more ſuitable to the God of the ocean? Neptune is called ἐννοσίγαιος, and ἐνοσίχθων, or the *Earth-ſhaker*; earthquakes were ſuppoſed to be occaſioned by the ocean, or waters concealed in the caverns of the ground; and conſequently Neptune may tumble a mountain upon this city of the Phæacians.

Beſides, Minerva, to ſecure her care,
Diffus'd around a veil of thicken'd air:

v. 225. *Beſides, Minerva, to ſecure her care,*
Diffus'd around a veil of thicken'd air.]

The meaning of this whole paſſage is probably no more than that Ulyſſes by his long abſence had forgot the face of his own country: the woods by almoſt twenty years growth had a different appearance; and the public roads were altered by ſo great a length of time. How then ſhould Ulyſſes come to the knowledge of the place? He goes to a ſhepherd, and by telling him a plauſible ſtory, draws it from him. This artifice is the Minerva that gives him information. By the *veil of thicken'd air* is meant, that Ulyſſes, to accompliſh his re-eſtabliſhment, took upon him a diſguiſe, and concealed himſelf from the Ithacans; and this too being the dictate of wiſdom, Homer aſcribes it to Pallas.

The words of the original are,

— — Ὀφρά μιν αὐτὴν
Ἄγνωσον τεύξειεν — —

which are uſually applied by interpreters to Ulyſſes, and mean that the Goddeſs diſguiſed him with this veil, that no one might know him. Dacier is of opinion that ἄγνως ought to be uſed actively; that is, the Goddeſs acted thus to make him *unknowing* where he was, not *unknown* to the people; for that this was the effect of the veil, appears from the removal of it; for immediately upon the diſperſion,

The king with joy confeſs'd his place of birth.

That the word ἄγνως will bear an active ſignification, ſhe proves from the ſcholiaſt upon Oedipus of Sophocles. But perhaps the context will not permit this interpretation,

For ſo the Gods ordain'd to keep unſeen
His royal perſon from his friends and queen;
'Till the proud ſuitors for their crimes afford
An ample vengeance to their injur'd Lord.
Now all the land another proſpect bore,
Another port appear'd, another ſhore,
And long-continu'd ways, and winding floods,
And unknown mountains, crown'd with unknown woods.
Penſive and ſlow with ſudden grief oppreſt
The king aroſe, and beat his careful breaſt,
Caſt a long look o'er all the coaſt and main,
And ſought, around, his native realm in vain:
Then with erected eyes ſtood fix'd in woe,
And as he ſpoke, the tears began to flow.

though we ſhould allow that the word ἄγνωστος will bear it. The paſſage runs thus: Pallas caſt round a veil of air, that ſhe might make him unknown, that ſhe might inſtruct him, and that his wife and friends might not know him; for thus Homer interprets ἄγνωστον in the very next line, μὴ γνοίη ἄλοχος. It is therefore probable that this veil had a double effect, both to render Ulyſſes unknown to the country, and the country to Ulyſſes. I am perſuaded that this is the true meaning of ἄγνωστος from the uſage of it in this very book of the Odyſſey.

Ἀλλ', ἄγε, σ' ἄγνωστον πεύξω πάντεσσι βροτοῖσι.

Here it can poſſibly ſignify nothing, but *I will render thee unknown to all mankind*; it is therefore probable, that in both places it bears the ſame ſignification.

Ye Gods! he cry'd, upon what barren coaſt
In what new region is Ulyſſes toſt?
Poſſeſs'd by wild barbarians, fierce in arms?
Or men whoſe boſom tender pity warms?
Where ſhall this treaſure now in ſafety lie?
And whither, whither, its ſad owner fly?
Ah why did I Alcinous' grace implore?
Ah why forſake Phæacia's happy ſhore?
Some juſter prince perhaps had entertain'd,
And ſafe reſtor'd me to my native land.
Is this the promis'd long-expected coaſt,
And this the faith Phæacia's ruler's boaſt?
Oh righteous Gods! of all the great, how few
Are juſt to Heav'n, and to their promiſe true!
But he, the Pow'r to whoſe all-ſeeing eyes
The deeds of men appear without diſguiſe,
'Tis his alone t' avenge the wrongs I bear:
For ſtill th' oppreſs'd are his peculiar care.
To count theſe preſents, and from thence to prove
Their faith, is mine: the reſt belongs to Jove.
Then on the ſands he rang'd his wealthy ſtore,
The gold, the veſts, the tripods, number'd o'er:

v. 262. *The gold, the veſts, the tripods number'd o'er.*] The conduct of Ulyſſes in numbering his effects has been cenſured by ſome criticks as avaricious: but we find him vindicated by Plutarch in his treatiſe of Reading the Poets: "If (ſays that author) Ulyſſes finding himſelf in a ſolitary "place, and ignorant of the country, and having no ſecu- "rity even for his own perſon, is nevertheleſs chiefly ſo- "licitous for his effects, leſt any part might have been

All theſe he found, but ſtill in errour loſt
Diſconſolate he wanders on the coaſt,
Sighs for his country, and laments again
To the deaf rocks, and hoarſe-reſounding main.
When lo! the guardian Goddeſs of the wiſe,
Celeſtial Pallas, ſtood before his eyes;
In ſhow a youthful ſwain, of form divine,
Who ſeem'd deſcended from ſome princely line,
A graceful robe her ſlender body dreſt,
Around her ſhoulders flew the waving veſt,
Her decent hand a ſhining jav'lin bore,
And painted ſandals on her feet ſhe wore.
To whom the king. Whoe'er of human race
Thou art, that wander'ſt in this deſert place!
With joy to thee, as to ſome God, I bend,
To thee my treaſures and myſelf commend.
O tell a wretch in exile doom'd to ſtray,
What air I breathe, what country I ſurvey?

" ſtolen; his covetouſneſs is really to be pitied and de-
" teſted. But this is not the caſe: he counts his goods
" merely to prove the fidelity of the Phæacians, and to
" gather from it, whether they had landed him upon his
" own country; for it was not probable that they would
" expoſe him in a ſtrange region, and leave his goods
" untouched, and by conſequence reap no advantage
" from their diſhoneſty: this therefore was a proper teſt
" from which to diſcover, if he was in his own country,
" and he deſerved commendation for his wiſdom in that
" action."

The fruitful continent's extreameſt bound,
Or ſome fair iſle which Neptune's arms ſurround!
From what fair clime (ſaid ſhe) remote from fame,
Arriv'ſt thou here a ſtranger to our name?
Thou ſeeſt an iſland, not to thoſe unknown
Whoſe hills are brighten'd by the riſing ſun,
Nor thoſe that plac'd beneath his utmoſt reign
Behold him ſinking in the weſtern main.
The rugged ſoil allows no level ſpace
For flying chariots, or the rapid race;
Yet not ungrateful to the peaſant's pain,
Suffices fulneſs to the ſwelling grain:
The loaded trees their various fruits produce,
And cluſt'ring grapes afford a gen'rous juice:

v. 293. *The loaded trees their various fruits produce.*] Nothing is more notorious, than that an epick writer ought to give importance and grandeur to his action as much as poſſible in every circumſtance; here the poet takes an opportunity to ſet the country of Ulyſſes in the moſt advantageous light, and ſhews that it was a prize worth the conteſt, and all the labour which Ulyſſes beſtows to regain it. Statius is very faulty in this particular; he declaims againſt the deſigns he aſcribes to his heroes, he debaſes his own ſubject, and ſhews that the great labour he puts them upon was ill employed for ſo wretched and pitiful a kingdom as that of Thebes. Thebaid, lib. i.

"——Bellum eſt de paupere regno."

But Ulyſſes was not king of Ithaca alone, but of Zacynthus, and Cephalenia, and the neighbouring iſlands. This appears from the ſecond book of the Iliad, where he leads his ſubjects to the walls of Troy,

Woods crown our mountains, and in ev'ry grove
The bounding goats and friſking heifers rove:
Soft rains and kindly dews refreſh the field,
And riſing ſprings eternal verdure yield.

With thoſe whom Cephalenia's iſle inclos'd,
Or till'd their fields along the coaſt oppos'd,
Or where fair Ithaca o'erlooks the floods,
Where high Neritos ſhakes his waving woods,
Where Ægilipa's rugged ſides are ſeen,
Crocylia rocky, and Zacynthus green.

It is true that Ithaca contains little more than fifty miles in circuit, now called Val de Compare; Cephalenia is larger, and is one hundred and ſixty miles in circumference: Zacynthus, now Zant, is in circuit about ſixty miles, unſpeakably fruitful, ſays Sandys, producing the beſt oil in the world, and excellent ſtrong wines; but the chief riches of the iſland conſiſt in corinths, which the inhabitants of Zant have in ſuch quantities that they know not what to do with them; for beſides private gains, amounting to fifteen hundred thouſand zechins, they yearly pay forty-eight thouſand dollars for cuſtoms and other duties. It is impoſſible ſo little a portion of earth ſhould be more beneficial.

This obſervation is neceſſary to ſhew the value of Ulyſſes's dominions, and that the ſubject of the Odyſſey is not trivial and unimportant; it is likewiſe of uſe to convince us, that the domeſtick cares and concerns of Telemachus proceeded not from meanneſs, but from the manners of the age; when pomp and luxury had not yet found countenance from princes; and that when we ſee Eumæus, who has the charge of Ulyſſes's hogs, we are not to ſuppoſe him a perſon of low rank and fortunes, but an officer of ſtate and truſt: the riches of thoſe ages conſiſting in flocks and herds, in ſwine and oxen.

Ev'n to thoſe ſhores is Ithaca renown'd,
Where Troy's majeſtick ruins ſtrow the ground.
At this, the chief with tranſport was poſſeſt,
His panting heart exulted in his breaſt:
Yet well diſſembling his untimely joys,
And veiling truth in plauſible diſguiſe,
Thus, with an air ſincere, in fiction bold,
His ready tale th' inventive hero told.
Oft' have I heard in Crete, this iſland's name;
For 'twas from Crete my native ſoil I came,
Self-baniſh'd thence. I ſail'd before the wind,
And left my children and my friends behind.
From fierce Idomeneus' revenge I flew,
Whoſe ſon, the ſwift Orſilochus, I ſlew:

v. 299. *Ev'n to thoſe ſhores is Ithaca renown'd.*] Nothing can more raiſe our eſteem of the judgment of Homer than ſuch ſtrokes of art. Here he introduces Minerva to let Ulyſſes into the knowledge of his country: How does ſhe do this? ſhe geographically deſcribes it to him; ſo that he muſt almoſt know it by the deſcription: but ſtill ſhe ſuppreſſes the name, and this keeps him in a pleaſing ſuſpenſe; he attends to every ſyllable to hear her name Ithaca, which ſhe ſtill defers, to continue his doubts and hopes, and at laſt, in the very cloſe of her ſpeech, ſhe indirectly mentions it. This diſcovery, in my judgment, is carried on with great addreſs, and cannot fail of awakening the curioſity of the reader; and I wonder how it could eſcape the obſervation of all the commentators upon the Odyſſey.

v. 311. *From fierce Idomeneus' revenge I flew,*
Whoſe ſon, the ſwift Orſilochus, I ſlew.]

Euſtathius obſerves, that this relation is not conſonant to

With brutal force he ſeiz'd my Trojan prey,
Due to the toils of many a bloody day)

antient hiſtories but invented to make the diſguiſed Ulyſſes more acceptable to the ſuitors, ſhould he be brought before them. For this perſon whom they could not know to be Ulyſſes, could not fail of finding favour with them, having ſlain the ſon of Idomeneus the friend of Ulyſſes: and though it be not recorded by the antients, yet it may be conjectured, that Orſilochus was thus ſlain, though not by Ulyſſes. If the death of Orſilochus was a ſtory that made a noiſe in the world about that time, it was very artful in Ulyſſes to make uſe of it, to gain credit with this ſeeming Ithacan; for he relating the fact truly, might juſtly be believed to ſpeak truly when he named himſelf the author of it, and conſequently avoid all ſuſpicion of being Ulyſſes. It is obſervable that Ulyſſes is very circumſtantial in his ſtory: he relates the time, the place, the manner, and the reaſon of his killing Orſilochus: this is done to give the ſtory a greater air of truth; for it ſeems almoſt impoſſible that ſo many circumſtances could be invented in a moment, and ſo well laid together as not to diſcover their own falſity. What he ſays concerning the Phæacians leaving his effects entire without any damage, is not ſpoken (as Euſtathius obſerves) in vain: he extols the fidelity of the Phæacians, as an example to be imitated by this ſeeming Ithacenſian, and makes it an argument that he ſhould practiſe the ſame integrity, in not offering violence or fraud to his effects or perſon.

It is true, the manner of the death of Orſilochus is liable to ſome objection, as it was executed clandeſtinely, and not heroically, as might be expected from the valour of Ulyſſes: but if it was a truth that Orſilochus was killed in that manner, Ulyſſes could not falſify the ſtory: but in reality he is no way concerned in it; for he ſpeaks in the character of a Cretan, not in the perſon of Ulyſſes.

Unſeen I 'ſcap'd; and favour'd by the night
In a Phœnician veſſel took my flight,

v. 316. *In a Phœnician veſſel took my flight.*] The whole ſtory of the voyages of Ulyſſes is related differently by Dictys Cretenſis, in his Hiſtory of the war of Troy: I will tranſcribe it, if not as a truth, yet as a curioſity.

"About this time Ulyſſes arrived at Crete with two "veſſels hired of the Phœnicians: for Telamon, enraged "for the death of his ſon Ajax, had ſeized upon all that "belonged to Ulyſſes and his companions, and he himſelf "was with difficulty ſet at liberty. While he was in "Crete, Idomeneus aſked him how he fell into ſuch great "calamities; to whom he reccunted all his adventures. "He told him, that after his departure from Troy, he "made an incurſion upon Iſmarus of the Ciconians, and "there got great booty; then touching upon the coaſt of "the Lotophagi, he met with ill ſucceſs, and ſailed away "to Sicily; there Cyclops and Læſtrigon, two brothers, "uſed him barbarouſly; and at length he loſt moſt of his "companions through the cruelty of Polypheme and Anti-"phates, the ſons of Cyclops and Læſtrigon: but being "afterwards received into favour by Polypheme, his com-"panions attempted to carry off Arene, the king's daugh-"ter, who was fallen in love with Elpenor, one of his aſ-"ſociates; but the affair being diſcovered, and Ulyſſes "diſmiſſed, he ſailed away by the Æolian iſlands, and "came to Circe and Calypſo, who were both queens of "two iſles: there his companions waſted ſome time in "dalliance and pleaſures: thence he ſailed to a people "that were famed for magical incantations, to learn his "future fortunes. He eſcaped the rocks of the Sirens, "Scylla, and Charybdis, though he there loſt many of "his companions; then he fell into the hands of Phœni-"cian rovers, who ſpared him; and afterwards coming "to Crete, he was diſmiſſed by Idomeneus with two veſ-"ſels, and arrived at the coaſt of Alcinous, who being

For Pyle or Elis bound: but tempeſts toſt
And raging billows drove us on your coaſt.
In dead of night an unknown port we gain'd,
Spent with fatigue, and ſlept ſecure on land.
But here the roſy morn renew'd the day,
While in th' embrace of pleaſing ſleep I lay,

" prevailed upon by the glory of his name, entertained
" him courteouſly: from him he learned that Penelope was
" addreſſed by thirty princes; upon this, with much in-
" treaty, he perſuaded Alcinous to undertake a voyage to
" re-eſtabliſh him in his territories; they ſet ſail together,
" and concealing themſelves with Telemachus till all things
" were concerted, they led their friends to the palace,
" and ſlew the ſuitors oppreſſed with ſleep and drow-
" ſineſs."

The difference between the poet and the hiſtorian lies chiefly in what is here ſaid of the death of Orſilochus; Dictys tells us, that Ulyſſes was entertained like a friend by Idomeneus, and Homer writes that he ſlew his ſon; now Idomeneus cannot be ſuppoſed to have favoured the murther of his ſon: but this is no objection, if we conſider that Ulyſſes ſpeaks not as Ulyſſes, but in a perſonated character, and therefore Orſilochus muſt be judged to have fallen by the hand of the perſon whoſe character Ulyſſes aſſumes; that is, by a Cretan, and not Ulyſſes.

Dictys is ſuppoſed to have ſerved under this Idomeneus, and to have wrote an hiſtory of the Trojan war in Phœnician characters: and Tzetzes tells us, that Homer formed his poem upon his plan; but the hiſtory now extant, publiſhed by Mrs. Le Fevre, is a counterfeit: ſo that what I have here tranſlated, is inſerted not as an authority, but as the opinion of an unknown writer; and I lay no other weight upon it.

Sudden, invited by auſpicious gales,
They land my goods, and hoiſt their flying ſails.
Abandon'd here, my fortune I deplore,
A hapleſs exile on a foreign ſhore.
Thus while he ſpoke, the blue-ey'd Maid began
With pleaſing ſmiles to view the god-like man:
Then chang'd her form: and now, divinely bright,
Jove's heav'nly Daughter ſtood confeſs'd to ſight.
Like a fair virgin in her beauty's bloom,
Skill'd in th' illuſtrious labours of the loom.
O ſtill the ſame Ulyſſes! ſhe rejoin'd,
In uſeful craft ſucceſsfully refin'd!
Artful in ſpeech, in action, and in mind!
Suſſic'd it not, that thy long labours paſt
Secure thou ſeeſt thy native ſhore at laſt?
But this to me? who, like thyſelf, excell
In arts of counſel, and diſſembling well;

v. 338. — — *Who, like thyſelf, excell*
In arts of counſel, and diſſembling well.]

It has been objected againſt Homer, that he gives a degree of diſſimulation to his hero, unworthy of a brave man, and an ingenuous diſpoſition: here we have a full vindication of Ulyſſes, from the mouth of the Goddeſs of Wiſdom; he uſes only a prudent diſſimulation; he is ἀϛχνώμων, which we may almoſt literally render, *maſter of a great preſence of mind:* that is, upon every emergency he finds an immediate reſource to extricate himſelf from it If his diſſimulation had been vicious, it would have been an abſurdity to have introduced Minerva praiſing and recommending it; on the contrary, all diſguiſe which conſiſts with innocence and prudence, is ſo far from being mean,

To me, whoſe wit exceeds the pow'rs divine,
No leſs than mortals are ſurpaſs'd by thine.
Know'ſt thou not me? who made thy life my care,
Thro' ten years wand'ring, and thro' ten years war:
Who taught thee arts, Alcinous to perſuade,
To raiſe his wonder, and engage his aid:
And now appear, thy treaſures to protect,
Conceal thy perſon, thy deſigns direct,
And tell what more thou muſt from Fate expect.
Domeſtick woes far heavier to be borne!
The pride of fools, and ſlaves inſulting ſcorn.
But thou be ſilent, nor reveal thy ſtate;
Yield to the force of unreſiſted fate,
And bear unmov'd the wrongs of baſe mankind,
The laſt, and hardeſt, conqueſt of the mind.

that it really is a praiſe to a perſon who uſes it. I ſpeak not of common life, or as if men ſhould always act under a maſk, and in diſguiſe; that indeed betrays deſign and inſincerity: I only recommend it as an inſtance how men ſhould behave in the article of danger, when it is as reputable to elude an enemy as to defeat one.

—— "Dolus an virtus quis in hoſte requirit."

This is the character of Ulyſſes, who uſes only ſuch an artifice as is ſuggeſted by wiſdom, ſuch as turns to his benefit in all extremities, ſuch as Minerva may boaſt to practiſe without a rival among the Gods, as much as Ulyſſes among mankind. In ſhort, this diſſimulation in war may be called ſtratagem and conduct, in other exigencies addreſs and dexterity; nor is Ulyſſes criminal, but artful.

Goddeſs of Wiſdom! Ithacus replies,
He who diſcerns thee muſt be truly wiſe,
So ſeldom view'd, and ever in diſguiſe!
When the bold Argives led their warring pow'rs,
Againſt proud Ilion's well defended tow'rs;
Ulyſſes was thy care, celeſtial Maid!
Grac'd with thy ſight, and favour'd with thy aid.
But when the Trojan piles in aſhes lay,
And bound for Greece we plough'd the wat'ry way;
Our fleet diſpers'd and driv'n from coaſt to coaſt,
Thy ſacred preſence from that hour I loſt:
'Till I beheld thy radiant form once more,
And heard thy counſels on Phæacia's ſhore.
But, by th' almighty author of thy race,
Tell me, oh tell, is this my native place?

v. 369. *Tell me, oh tell, is this my native place?*] It may appear ſomewhat extraordinary that Ulyſſes ſhould not believe Minerva, who had already aſſured him that he was landed in his own country: but two anſwers may be given to this objection, and his doubts may be aſcribed to his having loſt the knowledge of it through his long abſence, for that is the veil which is caſt before his eyes; or to the nature of man in general, who when he deſires any thing vehemently, ſcarce believes himſelf in the poſſeſſion of it, even while he poſſeſſes it. Nothing is more frequent than ſuch expreſſions upon the theatre, and in the tranſport of an unexpected happineſs, we are apt to think it a deluſion; from hence the fears of Ulyſſes ariſe, and they are to be imputed to his vehement love of his country, not to his unbelief.

For much I fear, long tracts of land and sea
Divide this coast from distant Ithaca;
The sweet delusion kindly you impose,
To soothe my hopes, and mitigate my woes.
Thus he. The blue-ey'd Goddess thus replies.
How prone to doubt, how cautious are the wise!
Who, vers'd in fortune, fear the flatt'ring show,
And taste not half the bliss the Gods bestow.
The more shall Pallas aid thy just desires,
And guard the wisdom which herself inspires.
Others long absent from their native place,
Straight seek their home, and fly with eager pace
To their wives arms, and children's dear embrace.
Not thus Ulysses: he decrees to prove
His subjects faith, and queen's suspected love;
Who mourn'd her lord twice ten revolving years,
And wastes the days in grief, the nights in tears.
But Pallas knew (thy friends and navy lost,)
Once more 'twas giv'n thee to behold thy coast:
Yet how could I with adverse Fate engage,
And mighty Neptune's unrelenting rage?
Now lift thy longing eyes, while I restore
The pleasing prospect of thy native shore.
Behold the port of Phorcys! fenc'd around
With rocky mountains, and with olives crown'd.
Behold the gloomy grot! whose cool recess
Delights the Nereids of the neighb'ring seas:

Whoſe now-neglected altars, in thy reign
Bluſh'd with the blood of ſheep and oxen ſlain,
Behold! where Neritus the clouds divides,
And ſhakes the waving foreſts on his ſides.
So ſpake the Goddeſs, and the proſpect clear'd,
The miſts diſpers'd, and all the coaſt appear'd.
The king with joy confeſs'd his place of birth,
And on his knees ſalutes his mother earth:
Then with his ſuppliant hands upheld in air,
Thus to the ſea-green Siſters ſends his pray'r.

All hail! ye virgin-daughters of the main!
Ye ſtreams, beyond my hopes beheld again!
To you once more your own Ulyſſes bows;
Attend his tranſports, and receive his vows!
If Jove prolong my days, and Pallas crown
The growing virtues of my youthful ſon,
To you ſhall rites divine be ever paid,
And grateful off'rings on your altars laid.

Then thus Minerva. From that anxious breaſt
Diſmiſs thoſe cares, and leave to Heav'n the reſt.
Our taſk be now thy treaſur'd ſtores to ſave,
Deep in the cloſe receſſes of the cave:
Then future means conſult – ſhe ſpoke, and trod
The ſhady grot, that brighten'd with the God.
The cloſeſt caverns of the grot ſhe ſought;
The gold, the braſs, the robes Ulyſſes brought;
Theſe in the ſecret gloom the chief diſpos'd;
The entrance with a rock the Goddeſs clos'd.

Now, ſeated in the olive's ſacred ſhade,
Confer the hero and the martial Maid.
The Goddeſs of the azure eyes began:
Son of Laertes! much-experienc'd man!
The ſuitor-train thy earli'ſt care demand,
Of that luxurious race to rid the land:
Three years thy houſe their lawleſs rule has ſeen,
And proud addreſſes to the matchleſs queen.
But ſhe thy abſence mourns from day to day,
And inly bleeds, and ſilent waſtes away:
Elufive of the bridal hour, ſhe gives
Fond hopes to all, and all with hopes deceives.
To this Ulyſſes. Oh celeſtial maid!
Prais'd be thy counſel, and thy timely aid:
Elſe had I ſeen my native walls in vain,
Like great Atrides juſt reſtor'd and ſlain.
Vouchſafe the means of vengeance to debate,
And plan with all thy arts the ſcene of fate.
Then, then be preſent, and my ſoul inſpire,
As when we wrapt Troy's heav'n-built walls in fire.
Tho' leagu'd againſt me hundred heroes ſtand,
Hundreds ſhall fall, if Pallas aid my hand.

v. 445. *Tho' leagu'd againſt me hundreds*, &c.] Nothing is more judicious than this conduct in Homer: the whole number of ſuitors are to be ſlain by a few hands, which might ſhock our reaſon if it were related ſuddenly, without any preparation to ſhew us the probability of it: this is the intent of Homer in this and various other places of the Odyſſey: he ſoftens the relation, and reconciles us to it by ſuch inſertions, before he deſcribes that great event.

She answer'd: in the dreadful day of fight
Know, I am with thee, strong in all my might.
If thou but equal to thyself be found,
What gasping numbers then shall press the ground!
What human victims stain the feastful floor!
How wide the pavements float with guilty gore!
It fits thee now to wear a dark disguise,
And secret walk, unknown to mortal eyes.
For this, my hand shall wither ev'ry grace,
And ev'ry elegance of form and face,

The antients (says Eustathius) would not here allow Ulysses to speak hyperbolically; he is that hero whom we have already seen in the Iliad resist whole bands of Trojans, when the Greeks were repulsed, where he slew numbers of enemies, and sustained their assaults till he was disengaged by Ajax. Besides, there is an excellent moral in what Ulysses speaks; it contains this certain truth, (adds Dacier) that a man assisted by heaven, has not only nothing to fear, but is assured to triumph over all the united powers of mankind.

v. 452. *How wide the pavements float with guilty gore!*] The words in the Greek are ἀσπίλον ὕδας, which Eustathius imagines to signify the land of Ithaca; for the hall even of a palace is too narrow to be stiled *immense* or ἀσπίλον. But this contradicts the matter of fact, as appears from the place where the suitors were slain, which was not in the fields of Ithaca, but in the palace of Ulysses: ἀσπίλον really signifies large or spacious; and a palace that could entertain at one time so great a number of suitors might be called vast or ἀσπίλος, which Hesychius interprets by λίαν πολὺς, μέγας. *Dacier.*

O'er thy ſmooth ſkin a bark of wrinkles ſpread,
Turn hoar the auburn honours of thy head,
Diſfigure ev'ry limb with coarſe attire,
And in thy eyes extinguiſh all the fire;
Add all the wants and the decays of life,
Eſtrange thee from thy own; thy ſon, thy wife;
From the loath'd object ev'ry ſight ſhall turn,
And the blind ſuitors their deſtruction ſcorn.
Go firſt the maſter of thy herds to find,
True to his charge, a loyal ſwain and kind:
For thee he ſighs; and to the royal heir
And chaſte Penelope extends his care.
At the Coracian rock he now reſides,
Where Arethuſa's ſable water glides;

v. 465. *Go firſt the maſter of thy herds to find.*] There are many reaſons why this injunction was neceſſary: the hero of a poem ought never to be out of ſight, never out of action: neither is Ulyſſes idle in this receſs; he goes thither to acquaint himſelf with the condition of his affairs, both publick and domeſtick: he there lays the plan for the deſtruction of the ſuitors, enquires after their numbers, and the ſtate of Penelope and Telemachus. Beſides, he here reſides in full ſecurity and privacy, till he has prepared all things for the execution of the great event of the whole Odyſſey.

v. 469. — — *Coracian rock* — —] This rock was ſo called from a young man whoſe name was Corax, who in purſuit of an hare fell from it and broke his neck: Arethuſa his mother hearing of this accident, hanged herſelf by the fountain, which afterwards took its name from her, and was called Arethuſa. *Euſtathius.*

The ſable water and the copious maſt
Swell the fat herd; luxuriant, large repaſt!
With him, reſt peaceful in the rural cell,
And all you aſk his faithful tongue ſhall tell.
Me into other realms my cares convey,
To Sparta, ſtill with female beauty gay:
For know, to Sparta, thy lov'd offspring came,
To learn thy fortunes from the voice of Fame.
At this the father, with a father's care.
Muſt he too ſuffer? he, oh Goddeſs! bear
Of wand'rings and of woes a wretched ſhare?
Thro' the wild ocean plough the dang'rous way,
And leave his fortunes and his houſe a prey?
Why would'ſt not thou, oh all-enlighten'd Mind!
Inform him certain, and protect him, kind?
To whom Minerva. Be thy ſoul at reſt;
And know, whatever Heav'n ordains, is beſt.
To fame I ſent him, to acquire renown:
To other regions is his virtue known.
Secure he ſits, near great Atrides plac'd!
With friendſhips ſtrengthen'd, and with honours grac'd.
But lo! an ambuſh waits his paſſage o'er;
Fierce foes inſidious intercept the ſhore:
In vain! far ſooner all the murth'rous brood
This injur'd land ſhall fatten with their blood.
She ſpake, then touch'd him with her pow'rful wand:
The ſkin ſhrunk up, and wither'd at her hand:

A ſwift old age o'er all his members ſpread;
A ſudden froſt was ſprinkled on his head;
Nor longer in the heavy eye-ball ſhin'd
The glance divine, forth-beaming from the mind.
His robe, which ſpots indelible beſmear,
In rags diſhoneſt flutters with the air:
A ſtag's torn hide is lapt around his reins;
A rugged ſtaff his trembing hand ſuſtains;

v. 502. *His robe with ſpots indelible beſmear*, &c.] I doubt not but Homer draws after the life. We have the whole equipage and accoutrements of a beggar, yet ſo drawn by Homer, as even to retain a nobleneſs and dignity: let any perſon read the deſcription, and he will be convinced of it; what can be more lofty and ſonorous than this verſe?

Ῥωſαλίη, ῥυπόωντα κακῷ μεμορυγμένα καπνῷ.

It is no humility to ſay that a tranſlator muſt fall ſhort of the original in ſuch paſſages; the Greek language has words noble and ſounding to expreſs all ſubjects, which are wanting in our tongue; all that is to be expected to keep the diction from appearing mean or ridiculous. They are greatly miſtaken who impute this diſguiſe of Ulyſſes in the form of a beggar, as a fault to Homer: there is nothing either abſurd or mean in it; for the way to make a king undiſcoverable, is to dreſs him as unlike himſelf as poſſible. David counterfeited madneſs, as Ulyſſes poverty, and neither of them ought to lie under any imputation; it is eaſy to vindicate Homer, from the diſguiſe of the greateſt perſons and generals in hiſtory, upon the like emergencies; but there is no occaſion for it.

And at his ſide a wretched ſcrip was hung,
Wide-patch'd, and knotted to a twiſted thong.
So look'd the chief, ſo mov'd! to mortal eyes
Object uncouth! a man of miſeries!
While Pallas, cleaving the wide fields of air,
To Sparta flies, Telemachus her care.

v. 510. *While Pallas, cleaving the wide fields of air,*
To Sparta flies — —]

Homer is now preparing to turn the relation from Ulyſſes to Telemachus, whom we left at Sparta with Menelaus in the fourth baok of the Odyſſey. He has been long out of ſight, and we have heard of none of his actions; Telemachus is not the hero of the poem: he is only an under-agent, and conſequently the poet was at liberty to omit any or all of his adventures, unleſs ſuch as have a neceſſary connexion with the ſtory of the Odyſſey, and contribute to the re-eſtabliſhment of Ulyſſes; by this method Homer gives variety to his poetry, and breaks or gathers up the thread of it, as it tends to diverſify the whole: we may conſider an epick poem as a ſpacious garden, where there are to be different walks and views, leſt the eye ſhould be tired with too great a regularity and uniformity: the chief avenue ought to be the moſt ample and noble, but there ſhould be by-walks to retire into ſometimes for our eaſe and refreſhment. The poet thus gives us ſeveral openings to draw us forward with pleaſure: and though the great event of the poem be chiefly in view, yet he ſometimes leads us aſide into other ſhort paſſages which end in it again, and bring us with pleaſure to the concluſion of it. Thus, for inſtance, Homer begins with the ſtory of Telemachus and the ſuitors: then he leaves them a-while, and more largely lays before us the adven-

tures of Ulyſſes, the hero of his poem; when he has ſatisfied the curioſity of the reader by a full narration of what belongs to him, he returns to Telemachus and the ſuitors: at length he unites the two ſtories, and proceeds directly to the end of the Odyſſey. Thus, all the collateral and indirect paſſages fall into one center and main point of view. The eye is continually entertained with ſome new object, and we paſs on from incident to incident, not only without fatigue, but with pleaſure and admiration.

THE

FOURTEENTH BOOK

OF THE

ODYSSEY.

THE ARGUMENT.

The Converſation with Eumæus.

ULYSSES arrives in diſguiſe at the houſe of Eumæus, where he is received, entertained, and lodged, with the utmoſt hoſpitality. The ſeveral diſcourſes of that faithful old ſervant, with the feigned ſtory told by Ulyſſes to conceal himſelf, and other converſations on various ſubjects, take up this entire book.

THE

* FOURTEENTH BOOK

OF THE

ODYSSEY.

BUT he, deep-muſing, o'er the mountains ſtray'd
Thro' mazy thickets of the woodland ſhade,
And cavern'd ways, the ſhaggy coaſt along,
With cliffs and nodding foreſts over-hung.

* We ſee in this book the character of a faithful, wiſe, benevolent old man in Eumæus; one happily innocent, unambitious, and wholly employed in rural affairs. The whole interview between Ulyſſes and Eumæus has fallen into ridicule; Eumæus has been judged to be of the ſame rank and condition with our modern ſwineherds. But herds and flocks were then kept and attended by the ſons of kings; thus Paris watched the flocks of Priam in the groves of Ida, and the ſame is ſaid of many of the heroes in the Iliad; theſe offices were places of dignity, and filled by perſons of birth; and ſuch was Eumæus, deſcended from a prince, named Cteſius: thus the maſter of the *horſe* is a poſt of honour in modern ages.

It is in poetry, as in painting; where the artiſt does not confine himſelf to draw only Gods or heroes, palaces and princes; but he frequently employs his pencil in repreſenting landſchapes, rural ſcenes, groves, cottages, and ſhepherds tending their flocks.

Eumæus at his ſilvan lodge he ſought,
A faithful ſervant, and without a fault.

There is a paſſage in monſieur Boileau's reflections upon Longinus, which fully vindicates all the places of Homer that have been cenſured as low and too familiar. "There is nothing (obſerves that author) that more "diſgraces a compoſition than the uſe of *vulgar words*: "a mean thought expreſſed in noble terms, is generally "more taking than a noble thought debaſed by mean "terms: the reaſon is, every perſon cannot judge of the "juſtneſs and ſtrength of a thought, but there are very "few, eſpecially in living langnages, who are not ſhocked at mean words: and yet almoſt all writers fall into "this fault. Longinus accuſes Herodotus, the moſt polite of all the Greek hiſtorians, of this defect; and "Livy, Salluſt, and Virgil, have fallen under the ſame "imputation. Is it not then very ſurpriſing that no reproach upon this account has fallen upon Homer? "eſpecially, though he has compoſed two large poems, "and though no author has deſcended more frequently "into the detail of little particularities; yet he never "uſes terms which are not noble, or if he uſes humble "words or phraſes, it is with ſo much art, that, as "Dionyſius Halicarnaſſus obſerves, they become noble "and harmonious. We may learn from hence the ignorance of thoſe modern criticks, who judge of the "Greek without the knowledge of it; and having never "read Homer but in low and inelegant tranſlations, impute the meanneſſes of the tranſlator to the poet. Beſides, the words of different languages are not exactly "correſpondent, and it often happens, that an expreſſion "which is noble in the Greek cannot be rendered in a "verſion but by words that are either mean in the ſound "or uſage. Thus *aſs*, and *aſinus* in Latin, are mean to "the laſt degree; though ὄνος in the Greek be uſed in

Ulyſſes found him buſied, as he ſat
Before the threſhold of his ruſtick gate;

" the moſt magnificent deſcriptions, and has nothing
" mean in it; in like manner the terms *hogherd* and *cow-*
" *keeper*, are not to be uſed in our poetry; but there are
" no finer words in the Greek language than βώκολος and
" συβώτης: and Virgil, who entitles his Eclogues Bucolicks
" in the Roman tongue, would have been aſhamed to
" call them in our language *the dialogues of cowkeepers.*"

Homer himſelf convinces us of the truth of this obſervation; nay, one would imagine that he intended induſtriouſly to force it upon our notice; for he frequently calls Eumæus ὄρχαμος ἀνδρῶν, or *prince of men*; and his common epithet is δῖος or θεῖος ὑφορβός. Homer would not have applied theſe appellations to him, if he had not been a perſon of dignity; it being the ſame title that he beſtows upon his greateſt heroes Ulyſſes or Achilles.

v. 1. *But he, deep muſing, o'er the mountain ſtray'd.*] I ſhall tranſcribe the obſervation of Dionyſius Halicarnaſſus upon the firſt verſes in this book: the ſame method, remarks that author, makes both proſe and verſe beautiful; which conſiſts in theſe three things, the judicious coaptation and ranging of the words, the poſition of the members and parts of the verſe, and the various meaſure of the periods. Whoever would write elegantly, muſt have regard to the different turn and juncture of every period, there muſt be proper diſtances and pauſes; every verſe muſt be a complete ſentence, but broken and interrupted, and the parts made unequal, ſome longer, ſome ſhorter, to give a variety of cadence to it. Neither the turn of the parts of the verſe, nor the length, ought to be alike. This is abſolutely neceſſary: for the epick or heroick verſe is of a fixed determinate length, and we cannot, as in the lyrick, make one longer, and another ſhorter; therefore to avoid an identity of cadence, and a

Around, the manſion in a circle ſhone;
A rural portico of rugged ſtone: 10

perpetual return of the ſame periods, it is requiſite to contract, lengthen, and interrupt the pauſe and ſtructure of the members of the verſes, to create an harmonious inequality, and out of a fixed number of ſyllables to raiſe a perpetual diverſity. For inſtance,

Αὐτὰρ ὅ ἐκ λιμένος προσίξη τρηχεῖαν ἀταρπόν.

Here one line makes one ſentence; the next is ſhorter,

Χῶρον ἄν' ὑλήεντα — —

The next is ſtill ſhorter,

— — δι' ἄκριας — —

The next ſentence compoſes two hemyſticks,

— — Ἣ οἱ Ἀθήνη
Πέφραδε δῖον ὑφορβὸν — —

and is entirely unlike any of the preceding periods.

— Ὃ οἱ βιότοιο μάλιστα
Κήδετο οἰκήων ὅς κλήσαλο δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς.

Here again the ſentence is not finiſhed with the former verſe, but breaks into the fourth line; and leſt we ſhould be out of breath, with the length of the ſentence, the period and the verſe conclude together at the end of it.

Then Homer begins a new ſentence, and makes it pauſe differently from any of the former.

Τὸν δ' ἂρ' ἐπὶ προδρόμῳ εὗρ' ἥμενον —

Then he adds,

— — Ἔνθά οἱ αὐλὴ
Ὑψηλὴ δέδμητο — —

This is perfectly unequal to the foregoing period, and the pauſe of the ſentence is carried forward into the ſecond

(In abſence of his Lord, with honeſt toil
His own induſtrious hands had rais'd the pile)
The wall was ſtone from neighb'ring quarries borne,
Encircled with a fence of native thorn,
And ſtrong with pales, by many a weary ſtroke
Of ſtubborn labour hewn from heart of oak;

verſe; and what then follows is neither diſtinguiſhed by the pauſes nor parts periodically, but almoſt at every word there is a ſtop.

—— —— Περισκέπτῳ ἐνὶ χώρῳ,
Καλήτε, μεδάλητε.

No doubt but Homer was a perfect maſter of numbers; a man can no more be a poet than a muſician, without a good ear, as we uſually expreſs it. It is true, that verſification is but the mechaniſm of poetry, but it ſets off good ſenſe to the beſt advantage; it is a colouring that enlivens the portrait, and makes even a beauty more agreeable.

I will conclude this note, with obſerving what Mr. Dryden ſays of theſe two lines of Cowper's Hill.

Tho' deep, yet clear, tho' gentle, yet not dull,
Strong without rage, without o'erflowing full.

"There are few, (ſays he) who make verſes, that have "obſerved the ſweetneſs of theſe lines, and fewer who "can find the reaſon of it." But I believe no one will be at a loſs to ſolve the difficulty who conſiders this obſervation of Dionyſius: and I doubt not but the chief ſweetneſs ariſes from the judicious and harmonious pauſes of the ſeveral periods of the verſes; not to mention the happy choice of the words, in which there is ſcarce one rough conſonant, many liquids, and thoſe liquids ſoftened with a multitude of vowels.

Frequent and thick. Within the ſpace were rear'd
Twelve ample cells, the lodgement of his herd.
Full fifty pregnant females each contain'd;
The males without (a ſmaller race) remain'd;
Doom'd to ſupply the ſuitors waſteful feaſt,
A ſtock by daily luxury decreaſt;
Now ſcarce four hundred left. Theſe to defend,
Four ſavage dogs, a watchful guard, attend.
Here ſat Eumæus, and his cares apply'd
To form ſtrong buſkins of well-ſeaſon'd hide.
Of four aſſiſtants who his labour ſhare,
Three now were abſent on the rural care;
The fourth drove victims to the ſuitor train:
But he, of antient faith, a ſimple ſwain,

v. 25. *Here ſat Eumæus, and his cares apply'd*, &c.] I doubt not but this employment of Eumæus has been another cauſe of the mean character that has been formed of his condition: but this miſtake ariſes from our judging of the dignity of men from the employments they followed three thouſand years paſt, by the notions we have of thoſe employments at preſent; and becauſe they are now only the occupation of the vulgar, we imagine that they were ſo formerly: kings and princes in the earlier ages of the world laboured in arts and occupations, and were above nothing that tended to promote the conveniencies of life; they performed that with their own hands, which we now perform by thoſe of our ſervants; if this were not ſo, the cookery of Achilles in the Iliad would equally diſparage that hero, as this employment would diſgrace Eumæus in the Odyſſey: arts were then in their infancy, and were honourable to the practiſers: thus Ulyſſes builds a veſſel with his own hands, as ſkilfully as a ſhipwright.

Sigh'd, while he furniſh'd the luxurious board,
And weary'd heav'n with wiſhes for his lord.

Beſides, even at this day arts are in high eſteem in the oriental world, and are practiſed by the greateſt perſonages. Every man in Turky is of ſome trade; ſultan Achmet was a maker of ivory rings, which the Turks wear upon their thumbs when they ſhoot their arrows, and in this occupation he worked ſeveral hours daily; and another of their emperors was depoſed, becauſe he refuſed to work in his occupation.

It muſt be confeſſed that our tranſlations have contributed to give thoſe who are unacquainted with the Greek, a mean idea of Eumæus. This place is thus rendered by two of his tranſlators.

Himſelf there ſat ord'ring a pair of brogues,
Of a py'd bullock's ſkin ——

Himſelf was leather to his foot applying,
Made of a good cow-hide well coloured.

Whereas Homer is as lofty and harmonious, as theſe are flat and inelegant.

Αὐτὸς δ' ἀμφὶ ποδέσσιν ἑοῖς ἁράρισκε πέδιλα
Τάμνων δέρμα βόειον, ἐϋχροές.

It is true, a tranſlator in ſuch places as theſe has an hard taſk; a language like the Greek, which is always flowing, muſical, and ſonorous, is very difficult to be imitated in other tongues, eſpecially where the corresponding words are not equally ſignificant and graceful.

In ſhort, the reader is to conſider this whole deſcription as a true picture of antient life; and then he will not fail of the pleaſure of knowing how the great men of antient times paſſed their lives, and how thoſe heroes, who performed ſuch noble parts on the publick ſtage of life, acted in private when withdrawn from notice and obſer-

Soon as Ulyſſes near th' encloſure drew,
With open mouths the furious maſtives flew:
Down ſat the ſage; and cautious to withſtand,
Let fall th' offenſive truncheon from his hand.

vation. Thoſe ages retained an univerſal ſimplicity of manners: Telemachus and Eumæus have both dogs for their attendants; nay, and in later times, before luxury prevailed among the Romans, we read of a dictator brought from the plough, to lead the braveſt ſoldiers in the world to conquer it.

v. 35. *Down ſat the ſage; and cautious to withſtand,*
Let fall th' offenſive truncheon from his hand.]

Homer has been cenſured by repreſenting his hero unworthily: is it probable that he who had met whole armies in battle, ſhould now throw away his ſtaff out of fear of a dog? that he ſhould abandon his defence by caſting himſelf on the ground, and leave himſelf to his mercy? But Euſtathius fully vindicates Ulyſſes. It is a natural defence to avert the fury of a dog, to caſt away our weapons, to ſhew that we intend him no violence. Pliny has the like obſervation in the eighth book of his Natural Hiſtory: *Impetus canum & ſævitia mitigatur ab homine humi confidente.*

All that Homer ſays of the dogs, is imitated by Theocritus, Idyll, xxv. v. 68.

Θεσπέσιον δ' ὑλάοντες ἐπίδραμον ἄλλοθεν ἄλλοι·
Τὺς μὲν ὄγε λάεσσιν ἀπὸ χθονὸς ὅσσον ἄειρον
Ἐτύγεμεν ἀψ' ὀπίσω δειδισσόμενος, &c.

What Homer ſpeaks of Ulyſſes, Theocritus applies to Hercules; a demonſtration that he thought it to be a picture of nature, and therefore inſerted it in that heroick Idyllium.

Sudden, the maſter runs; aloud he calls;
And from his haſty hand the leather falls;
With ſhow'rs of ſtones he drives them far away;
The ſcatt'ring dogs around at diſtance bay.
Unhappy ſtranger! (thus the faithful ſwain
Began with accent gracious and humane)

v. 37. *Sudden, the maſter runs,* &c.] This is thought to be an adventure that really happened to the poet himſelf; it is related in the life of Homer aſcribed to Herodotus. Theſtorides having perſuaded Homer to permit him to tranſcribe his verſes, he immediately removed to Chios, and proclaimed himſelf the author: Homer being informed of it, ſet ſail for Chios, and landing near it, he was in danger of being torn in pieces by the dogs of Glaucus, who protected him, and received him hoſpitably: the poet in return laboured to reward his kindneſs, by relating to him the moſt curious of his adventures that had happened in the courſe of his voyages. When therefore (adds Dacier) we ſee Ulyſſes entertained by Eumæus, we have the ſatisfaction of imagining we ſee Homer himſelf in diſcourſe with his courteous friend Glaucus.

v. 41. — — *Thus the faithful ſwain,* &c.] The words in the Greek are θεῖος ὑφορβός, literally rendered, *the divine ſwineherd,* which are burleſque in modern languages, and would have been no leſs in Greek, if the perſon of Eumæus had not been honourable, and his office a ſtation of dignity: for the ſole reaſon why ſuch a tranſlation would now be ridiculous, is becauſe ſuch employments are now fallen into contempt. Let any perſon aſk this queſtion, Would Homer have applied the epithet *divine* to a modern ſwineherd? If he would not, it is an evidence that Eumæus was a man of conſequence, and his poſt a place of honour; otherwiſe Homer would have been guilty of burleſquing his own poetry.

What ſorrow had been mine, if at my gate
Thy rev'rend age had met a ſhameful fate?
Enough of woes already have I known;
Enough my maſter's ſorrows and my own.
While here, (ungrateful taſk!) his herds I feed,
Ordain'd for lawleſs rioters to bleed;
Perhaps ſupported at another's board,
Far from his country roams my hapleſs lord!
Or ſigh'd in exile forth his lateſt breath,
Now cover'd with th' eternal ſhade of death!
But enter this my homely roof, and ſee
Our woods not void of hoſpitality.

Dacier very well remarks, that the words Eumæus here ſpeaks, and indeed his whole converſation, ſhew him to be a perſon of a good education, and of noble and pious ſentiments; he diſcovers a natural and flowing eloquence, and appears to be a man of great humanity and wiſdom.

There is a peculiarity in Homer's manner of apſtrophizing Eumæus, and ſpeaking of him in the ſecond perſon; it is generally applied by that poet only to men of account and diſtinction, and by it the poet, as it were, addreſſes them with reſpect; thus in the Iliad he introduces Menelaus.

Οὐδὲ σέθεν, Μενέλαϊ, θεοὶ ἐλάθοντο,
—— —— Τόνδε πρόσθεν Παλαιόχλε,

This enlivens the diction, and awakens the attention of the reader. Euſtathius obſerves that Eumæus is the only perſon of whom Homer thus ſpeaks in the whole Odyſſey: no doubt (continues that author) he does it out of love of this benevolent old ſervant of Ulyſſes; and to honour and diſtinguiſh his fidelity.

Then tell me whence thou art? and what the
ſhare
Of woes and wand'rings thou wert born to bear?

He ſaid, and ſeconding the kind requeſt,
With friendly ſtep precedes his unknown gueſt.
A ſhaggy goat's ſoft hide beneath him ſpread,
And with freſh ruſhes heap'd an ample bed:
Joy touch'd the hero's tender ſoul, to find
So juſt reception from a heart ſo kind:
And oh, ye Gods! with all your bleſſings grace
(He thus broke forth) this friend of human race!

The ſwain reply'd. It never was our guiſe
To ſlight the poor, or aught humane deſpiſe;

v. 66. *To ſlight the poor, or aught humane deſpiſe;*
For Jove unfolds our hoſpitable door,
'Tis Jove that ſends the ſtranger and the poor.]

This paſſage contains an admirable lecture of morality and humanity. The perſon who beſt underſtood the beauty of it, and beſt explained the precepts it comprehends, was Epictetus, from whom Monſieur Dacier furniſhes us with this explication from Arrian: "Keep (ſays "that author) continually in thy memory, what Eumæus "ſpeaks in Homer to the diſguiſed Ulyſſes." *O friend, it is unlawful to deſpiſe the ſtranger; ſpeak thus to thy brother, father, and neighbour: it is my duty to uſe you with benevolence, tho' your circumſtances were meaner than they are; for you come from God* Here we ſee Epictetus borrowing his morality from Homer; and philoſophy embelliſhed with the ornaments of poetry. Indeed there is ſcarce any writer of name among all the antients that has not been obliged to Homer, whether moraliſts, poets, philoſophers, or legiſlators.

For Jove unfolds our hoſpitable door,
'Tis Jove that ſends the ſtranger and the poor.
Little, alas! is all the good I can;
A man oppreſt, dependant, yet a man:
Accept ſuch treatment as a ſwain affords,
Slave to the inſolence of youthful lords!
Far hence is by unequal Gods remov'd
That man of bounties, loving and belov'd!
To whom whate'er his ſlave enjoys is ow'd,
And more, had Fate allow'd, had been beſtow'd:

v. 75. *To whom whate'er his ſlave enjoys is ow'd,*
And more, had Fate allow'd, — —]

This paſſage has been greatly miſtaken by almoſt all who have tranſlated Homer: the words at firſt view ſeem to imply that Ulyſſes had given Eumæus a wife, a houſe, and an inheritance; but this is not the meaning. The words are thus to be rendered; "Ulyſſes (ſays Eumæus) greatly "loved me, and gave me a poſſeſſion, and ſuch things as "an indulgent maſter gives a faithful ſervant; namely, "a wife, inheritance, and an houſe." Theſe gifts are to be applied to Ἄναξ εὔθυμος, and not to Ulyſſes; and the ſentence means, that it is the cuſtom of good kings in that manner to reward their faithful ſervants. It is very evident from Homer, that Ulyſſes had not yet given a wife to Eumæus; for he promiſes him and Philætius all theſe rewards, lib. xxi. of the Odyſſey.

Ἄξομαι ἀμφοτέροις ἀλόχους, καὶ κτήματ' ὀπάσσω,
Οἰκία τ' ἐξῆς ἐμεῖο τετυγμένα, καί μοι ἔπειτα
Τηλεμάχῳ ἑτάρω τε, κασιγνήτῳ τε ἑσσεῦντι.

It appears therefore that Eumæus was not married, and therefore this whole period is to be applied to the word ἄναξ, and not to Ulyſſes. *Euſtathius.*

But Fate condemn'd him to a foreign ſhore;
Much have I ſorrow'd, but my maſter more.
Now cold he lies, to death's embrace reſign'd:
Ah periſh Helen! periſh all her kind!
For whoſe curs'd cauſe, in Agamemnon's name,
He trod ſo fatally the paths of Fame.

His veſt ſuccinct then girding round his waſte,
Forth ruſh'd the ſwain with hoſpitable haſte,
Straight to the lodgements of his herd he run,
Where the fat porkers ſlept beneath the ſun;
Of two, his cutlace lanch'd the ſpouting blood;
Theſe quarter'd, ſindg'd, and fix'd on forks of wood,
All haſty on the hiſſing coals he threw;
And ſmoking back the taſteful viands drew,
Broachers and all; then on the board diſplay'd
The ready meal, before Ulyſſes laid
With flour imbrown'd; next mingled wine yet new,
And luſcious as the bees nectareous dew:

I will only add, that in the above-mentioned verſes Ulyſſes promiſes that Eumæus ſhall be the companion and brother of Telemachus; an inſtance, that he was not a vulgar perſon whom Ulyſſes thus honours, by making him allied to the royal family.

v. 93. *With flour imbrown'd* ——] We find here a cuſtom of antiquity: this flour was made of parched corn; when the antients fed upon any thing that had not been offered in ſacrifice, they ſprinkled it with flour, which was uſed inſtead of the hallowed barley, with which they conſecrated their victims. I doubt not, (ſince ſome honours were paid to the Gods in all feaſts) but that this

Then ſat companion of the friendly feaſt,
With open look; and thus beſpoke his gueſt.
Take with free welcome what our hands prepare,
Such food as falls to ſimple ſervants ſhare;
The beſt our Lords conſume; thoſe thoughtleſs peers,
Rich without bounty, guilty without fears!
Yet ſure the Gods their impious acts deteſt,
And honour juſtice and the righteous breaſt.
Pirates and conquerors, of harden'd mind,
The foes of peace, and ſcourges of mankind,
To whom offending men are made a prey
When Jove in vengeance gives a land away;
Ev'n theſe, when of their ill-got ſpoils poſſeſs'd,
Find ſure tormentors in the guilty breaſt:
Some voice of God cloſe whiſp'ring from within,
"Wretch! this is villany, and this is ſin."
But theſe, no doubt, ſome oracle explore,
That tells, the great Ulyſſes is no more.
Hence ſprings their confidence, and from our ſighs
Their rapine ſtrengthens, and their riots riſe:
Conſtant as Jove the night and day beſtows,
Bleeds a whole hecatomb, a vintage flows.
None match'd this hero's wealth, of all who reign
O'er the fair iſlands of the neighb'ring main.
Nor all the monarchs whoſe far dreaded ſway
The wide-extended continents obey:

ſprinkling of flour by Eumæus was an act of religion. *Dacier.*

Firſt, on the main-land, of Ulyſſes' breed
Twelve herds, twelve flocks, on ocean's margin feed;

v. 122. *Twelve herds, twelve flocks,* &c.] I have already remarked, that Ulyſſes was a wealthy king, and this place is an inſtance of it. He is maſter of twelve herds of oxen, which probably amounted to fourteen thouſand four hundred; for if we count the herds by the ſame way of computation as the droves of ſwine, they will make that number, each drove conſiſting of twelve hundred: for though Homer mentions but three hundred and ſixty boars, yet he tells us, the reaſon why they were inferior to the females was becauſe of the luxury of the ſuitors. If this be allowed, then he had likewiſe the ſame number of ſheep, and as many hogs: for Eumæus had the charge only of one herd, eleven more were under the care of other officers: Ulyſſes likewiſe had thirteen thouſand two hundred goats. This will appear to be a true calculation from the words of Homer, who tells us, that twenty of the greateſt heroes of the age were not ſo wealthy as Ulyſſes.

The old poets and hiſtorians, to expreſs a perſon of great riches, gave him the epithet of πολυμήλων, πολυαρνῶν, or πολυβοτείνος; that is, "a perſon that had a great number "of ſheep or cattle, or a perſon of great wealth." This is likewiſe evident from the holy Scriptures: David had his officers, like Ulyſſes, to attend his flocks and herds: thus 1 Chron. xxvii. Jehonathan was ſet over his treaſures in the field, cities and villages; Shimei over his vineyards; Zabdi over his wine-cellars; Baal-hanan over his olive-trees, and Joaſh over his oil: he had herdſmen that had charge over his cattle, ſheep, camels, and aſſes. It was by cattle that the antient kings enriched themſelves from he earlieſt ages: thus no leſs a perſon than Pharoah, a powerful king of Ægypt, gave Joſeph leave to appoint

As many ſtalls for ſhaggy goats are rear'd;
As many lodgements for the tuſky herd;
Thoſe foreign keepers guard: and here are ſeen
Twelve herds of goats that graze our utmoſt green;
To native paſtors is their charge aſſign'd;
And mine the care to feed the briſtly kind:
Each day the fatteſt bleeds of either herd,
All to the ſuitors waſteful board preferr'd.

Thus he, benevolent; his unknown gueſt
With hunger keen devours the ſav'ry feaſt;
While ſchemes of vengeance ripen in his breaſt.
Silent and thoughtful while the board he ey'd,
Eumæus pours on high the purple tide;
The king with ſmiling looks his joy expreſt,
And thus the kind inviting hoſt addreſt.

Say now, what man is he, the man deplor'd,
So rich, ſo potent, whom you ſtyle your lord?
Late with ſuch affluence and poſſeſſions bleſt,
And now in honour's glorious bed at reſt.
Whoever was the warriour, he muſt be
To Fame no ſtranger, nor perhaps to me;

his brethren to be rulers over his cattle; and we read in all the Greek poets, that the wealth of kings originally conſiſted in herds and flocks. They loſe much of the pleaſure of Homer who read him only as a poet: he gives us an exact image of antient life, their manners, cuſtoms, laws, and politicks; and it muſt double our ſatisfaction, when we conſider that in reading Homer we are reading the moſt antient author in the world, except the great lawgiver Moſes.

Who (ſo the Gods, and ſo the Fates ordain'd)
Have wander'd many a ſea, and many a land.
Small is the faith, the prince and queen aſcribe
(Reply'd Eumæus) to the wand'ring tribe.
For needy ſtrangers ſtill to flatt'ry fly,
And want too oft' betrays the tongue to lye.
Each vagrant traveller that touches here,
Deludes with fallacies the royal ear,
To dear remembrance makes his image riſe,
And calls the ſpringing ſorrows from her eyes.
Such thou may'ſt be. But he whoſe name you crave
Moulders in earth, or welters on the wave,
Or food for fiſh, or dogs, his reliques lie,
Or torn by birds are ſcatter'd thro' the ſky.
So periſh'd he: and left (for ever loſt)
Much woe to all, but ſure to me the moſt.
So mild a maſter never ſhall I find
Leſs dear the parents whom I left behind,
Leſs ſoft my mother, leſs my father kind.
Not with ſuch tranſport wou'd my eyes run o'er,
Again to hail them in their native ſhore;
As lov'd Ulyſſes once more to embrace,
Reſtor'd and breathing in his natal place.
That name for ever dread, yet ever dear,
Ev'n in his abſence I pronounce with fear:

v. 167. *That name for ever dread,* &c.] Euſtathius excellently explains the ſentiment of Eumæus, which is full of tenderneſs and humanity. I will not call Ulyſſes, cries Eumæus, by the name of Ulyſſes, for from ſtrangers he

In my reſpect, he bears a prince's part;
But lives a very brother, in my heart.
Thus ſpoke the faithful ſwain, and thus rejoin'd
The maſter of his grief, the man of patient mind.
Ulyſſes, friend! ſhall view his old abodes,
(Diſtruſtful as thou art) nor doubt the Gods.
Nor ſpeak I raſhly, but with faith averr'd,
And what I ſpeak atteſting Heav'n has heard.
If ſo, a cloak and veſture be my meed;
'Till his return, no title ſhall I plead,
Tho' certain be my news, and great my need.
Whom want itſelf can force untruths to tell,
My ſoul deteſts him as the gates of hell.
Thour firſt be witneſs, hoſpitable Jove!
And ev'ry God inſpiring ſocial love;
And witneſs ev'ry houſhold pow'r that waits
Guard of theſe fires, and angel of theſe gates!

receives that appellation; I will not call him my maſter, for as ſuch he never was towards me; I will then call him brother, for he always uſed me with the tenderneſs of a brother. Ἥθεῖος properly ſignifies an elder brother.

What I would further obſerve is, the wonderful art of Homer in exalting the character of his hero: he is the braveſt and the beſt of men, good in every circumſtance of life: valiant in war, patient in adverſity, a kind father, huſband, and maſter, as well as a mild and merciful king: by this conduct the poet deeply engages our affections in the good or ill fortune of the hero: he makes himſelf maſter of our paſſions, and we rejoice or grieve at his ſucceſs or calamity through the whole Odyſſey.

Ere the next moon increaſe, or this decay,
His antient realms Ulyſſes ſhall ſurvey,

v. 186. *Ere the next moon increaſe, or this decay.*] Theſe verſes have been thought to be uſed ænigmatically by Ulyſſes.

Τῷ δ' αὐτῷ λυκάβαντι· ἐλεύσεται ἐνθάδ' Ὀδυσσεὺς,
Τῷ μὲν φθίνοντι· μηνὸς, τῷ δ' ἱσταμένοιο.

In the former verſe Euſtathius tells us there is a various reading, and judges that it ought to be written τῷ δ' αὖ τῷ, and not τῷ δ' αὐτῷ; and it muſt be allowed that the repetition of τῷ gives a greater emphaſis to the words, and agrees better with the vehemence of the ſpeaker in making his aſſeveration.

The latter verſe in the obvious ſenſe ſeems to mean that Ulyſſes would return in the ſpace of a month, and ſo Eumæus underſtood it; but in reality it means in the compaſs of a day. Solon was the firſt who diſcovered the latent ſenſe of it, as Plutarch informs us: "Solon, ſays "that author, obſerving the inequality of the months, "and that the moon neither agreed with the riſing or "ſetting of the ſun, but that often in the ſame day ſhe "over-took and went before it, named that ſame day "ἕνη καὶ νέα, *the old and new moon*; and allotted that part of "the day that preceded the conjunction, to the old moon, "and the other part of it to the new; from hence we "may judge that he was the firſt that comprehended the "ſenſe of this verſe of Homer.

Τῷ μὲν φθίνοντος μηνὸς, τῷ δ' ἱσταμένου.

"accordingly he named the following day, *the day of the* "*new moon*. Ulyſſes then means that he will return on "the laſt day of the month, for on that day the moon "is both old and new; that is, ſhe finiſhes one month, "and begins another." This is taken from the life of Solon; but whether the obvious ſenſe in which Eumæus

In blood and duſt each proud oppreſſor mourn,
And the loſt glories of his houſe return.

Nor ſhall that meed be thine, nor ever more
Shall lov'd Ulyſſes hail this happy ſhore,
(Reply'd Eumæus:) to the preſent hour
Now turn thy thought, and joys within our pow'r.
From ſad reflection let my ſoul repoſe;
The name of him awakes a thouſand woes.
But guard him Gods! and to theſe arms reſtore!
Not his true conſort can deſire him more;
Not old Laertes, broken with deſpair;
Not young Telemachus, his blooming heir.
Alas, Telemachus! my ſorrows flow
Afreſh for thee, my ſecond cauſe of woe!
Like ſome fair plant ſet by a heav'nly hand,
He grew, he flouriſh'd, and he bleſt the land;
In all the youth his father's image ſhin'd,
Bright in his perſon, brighter in his mind.

is ſuppoſed to underſtand it, or the latent meaning of Solon be preferable, is ſubmitted to the reader's judgment; I confeſs I ſee no occaſion to have recourſe to that myſterious explication: what Ulyſſes intended was to certify Eumæus, that Ulyſſes would aſſuredly return very ſpeedily; and the verſe will have this effect, if it be underſtood literally and plainly: beſides, Ulyſſes is to continue in an abſolute diſguiſe; why then ſhould he endanger a diſcovery, by uſing an ambiguous ſentence, which might poſſibly be underſtood? But if it was ſo dark that it was utterly unintelligible to Eumæus, then it is uſed in vain, and a needleſs ambiguity.

What man, or God, deceiv'd his better ſenſe,
Far on the ſwelling ſeas to wander hence?
To diſtant Pylos hapleſs is he gone,
To ſeek his father's fate, and find his own!
For traitors wait his way, with dire deſign
To end at once the great Arceſian line.
But let us leave him to their wills above;
The fates of men are in the hand of Jove.
And now, my venerable gueſt! declare
Your name, your parents, and your native air:
Sincere from whence begun your courſe relate,
And to what ſhip I owe the friendly freight?

Thus he: and thus (with prompt invention bold)
The cautious chief his ready ſtory told.

On dark reſerve what better can prevail,
Or from the fluent tongue produce the tale,
Than when two friends, alone, in peaceful place
Confer, and wines and cates the table grace;
But moſt, the kind inviter's chearful face?
Thus might we ſit, with ſocial goblets crown'd,
'Till the whole circle of the year goes round;
Not the whole circle of the year wou'd cloſe
My long narration of a life of woes.
But ſuch was Heav'n's high will! Know then, I came
From ſacred Crete, and from a ſire of Fame:

v. 229. — — *Know then, I came*
From ſacred Crete, — —]

This whole narration is a notable inſtance of that artful diſſimulation ſo remarkable in the character of Ulyſſes,

Caſtor Hylacides (that name he bore)
Belov'd and honour'd in his native ſhore;
Bleſt in his riches, in his children more.

and an evidence that Homer excellently ſuſtains it through the whole poem; for Ulyſſes appears to be πολύτροπος, as he is repreſented in the firſt line, throughout the Odyſſey. This narrative has been both praiſed and cenſured by the criticks, eſpecially by Rapin. I will lay his obſervations before the reader.

" Homer is guilty of verboſity, and of a tedious prolix " manner of ſpeaking. He is the greateſt talker of all " antiquity: the very Greeks, though chargeable with " an exceſs this way above all nations, have reprehended " Homer for his intemperance of words; he is ever upon " his rehearſals, and not only of the ſame words, but of " the ſame things, and conſequently is in a perpetual " circle of repetitions. It is true he always ſpeaks natu- " rally, but then he always ſpeaks too much: his ad- " ventures in Ægypt, which he relates to Eumæus, are " truly idle impertinent ſtories, purely for amuſement: " there is no thread in his diſcourſe, nor does it ſeem to " tend to any propoſed end, but exceeds all bounds: that " vaſt fluency of ſpeech, and thoſe mighty overflowings " of fancy, make him ſhoot beyond the mark. Hence " his draughts are too accurate, and leave nothing to be " performed by the imagination of the reader, a fault " which (as Cicero obſerves) Apelles found in the antient " painters." This objection is intended only againſt the fullneſs of Homer's expreſſion, not againſt the ſubject of the narration; for Rapin in another place ſpeaking of the beauties of Homer, gives this very ſtory as an inſtance of his excellency. Theſe are his words:

" I ſhall ſay nothing of all the relations which Ulyſſes " makes to Eumæus upon his return to his country, and " his wonderful management to bring about his re eſtab-

Sprung of a handmaid, from a bought embrace,
I ſhar'd his kindneſs with his lawful race: 235

" liſhment; the whole ſtory is dreſt in colours ſo decent,
" and at the ſame time ſo noble, that antiquity can hard-
" ly match any part of the narration."

If what Rapin remarks in the latter period be true, Homer will eaſily obtain a pardon for the fault of prolixity, imputed to him in the aforementioned objection. For who would be willing to retrench one of the moſt decent and noble narrations of antiquity, merely for the length of it? But it may, perhaps, be true that this ſtory is not impertinent, but well ſuited to carry on the deſign of Ulyſſes, and conſequently tends to a propoſed end: for in this conſiſts the ſtrength of Rapin's objection.

Nothing is more evident than that the whole ſucceſs of Ulyſſes depends upon his diſguiſe; a diſcovery would be fatal to him, and at once give a ſingle unaſſiſted perſon into the power of his enemies. How then is this diſguiſe to be carried on? eſpecially when Ulyſſes in perſon is required to give an account of his own ſtory? Muſt it not be by aſſuming the name of another perſon, and giving a plauſible relation of his life, fortunes, and calamities, that brought him to a ſtrange country, where he has no acquaintance or friend? This obliges him to be circumſtantial, nothing giving a greater air of probability than deſcending to particularities, and this neceſſitates his prolixity. The whole relation is comprehended in the compaſs of an hundred and ſeventy lines; and an epiſode of no greater length may not perhaps deſerve to be called *verboſe*, if compared with the length of the Odyſſey: nay, there may be a reaſon given why it ought to be of a conſiderable length: there is a pauſe in the action, while Minerva paſſes from Ithaca to Telemachus in Lacedæmon: this interval is to be filled up with ſome incident relating to Ulyſſes, until Telemachus is prepared to return; for

But when that fate, which all muſt undergo,
From earth remov'd him to the ſhades below;
The large domain his greedy ſons divide,
And each was portion'd as the lots decide.
Little alas! was leſt my wretched ſhare,
Except a houſe, a covert from the air:
But what by niggard fortune was deny'd,
A willing widow's copious wealth ſupply'd.

his aſſiſtance is neceſſary to re-eſtabliſh the affairs of Ulyſſes. This then is a time of leiſure, and the poet fills it up with the narrations of Ulyſſes till the return of Telemachus, and conſequently there is room for a long relation. Beſides (remarks Euſtathius) Homer intereſts all men of all ages in the ſtory, by giving us pieces of true hiſtory, antient cuſtoms, and exact deſciptions of perſons and places, inſtructive and delightful to all the world, and theſe incidents are adorned with all the embelliſhments of eloquence and poetry.

v. 234. *Sprung of a handmaid* — —] Ulyſſes ſays he was the ſon of a concubine: this was not a matter of diſgrace among the antients, concubinage being allowed by the laws.

The ſons caſt lots for their patrimony, an evidence that this was the practice of the antient Greeks. Hence an inheritance had the name κληρονομία, that is, from the lots; parents put it to the deciſion of the lot, to avoid the envy and imputation of partiality in the diſtribution of their eſtates. It has been judged that the poet writes according to the Athenian laws, at leaſt this cuſtom prevailed in the days of Solon; for he forbad parents who had ſeveral legitimate ſons to make a will, but ordered that all the legitimate ſons ſhould have an equal ſhare of their father's effects. *Euſtathius.*

My valour was my plea, a gallant mind
That, true to honour, never lagg'd behind,
(The ſex is ever to a ſoldier kind.)
Now waſting years my former ſtrength confound,
And added woes have bow'd me to the ground;
Yet by the ſtubble you may gueſs the grain,
And mark the ruins of no vulgar man.
Me, Pallas gave to lead the martial ſtorm,
And the fair ranks of battle to deform:
Me, Mars inſpir'd to turn the foe to flight,
And tempt the ſecret ambuſh of the night.
Let ghaſtly death in all his forms appear,
I ſaw him not; it was not mine to fear.
Before the reſt I rais'd my ready ſteel;
The firſt I met, he yielded, or he fell.
But works of peace my ſoul diſdain'd to bear,
The rural labour, or domeſtick care.

v. 259. — — *My ſoul diſdain'd to bear,*
The rural labour — — —]

Plutarch, in his compariſon of Ariſtides and Cato, cites theſe verſes,

— — ἔργον δέ μοι οὐ φίλον ἦεν.
Οὐδ' οἰκωφελίη, &c.

and tells us, that they who neglect their private and domeſtick concerns, uſually draw their ſubſiſtence from violence and rapine. This is certainly a truth: men are apt to ſupply their wants, occaſioned by idleneſs, by plunder and injuſtice: but it is as certain that no reflection is in-

To raiſe the maſt, the miſſile dart to wing,
And ſend ſwift arrows from the bounding ſtring,
Were arts the Gods made grateful to my mind;
Thoſe Gods, who turn (to various ends deſign'd)
The various thoughts and talents of mankind.
Before the Grecians touch'd the Trojan plain,
Nine times commander or by land or main,
In foreign fields I ſpread my glory far,
Great in the praiſe, rich in the ſpoils of war:
Thence charg'd with riches, as increas'd in fame,
To Crete return'd, an honourable name.
But when great Jove that direful war decreed,
Which rous'd all Greece, and made the mighty bleed;
Our ſtates myſelf and Idomen employ
To lead their fleets, and carry death to Troy.
Nine years we warr'd; the tenth ſaw Ilion fall,
Homeward we ſail'd, but Heav'n diſpers'd us all.
One only month my wife enjoy'd my ſtay;
So will'd the God who gives and takes away.
Nine ſhips I mann'd, equipp'd with ready ſtores,
Intent to voyage to th' Ægyptian ſhores;

tended to be caſt upon this way of living by Ulyſſes, for in his age piracy was not only allowable, but glorious; and ſudden inroads and incurſions were practiſed by the greateſt heroes. Homer therefore only intends to ſhew that the diſpoſition of Ulyſſes inclined him to purſue the more dangerous, but more glorious, way of living by war, than the more lucrative, but more ſecure method of life, by agriculture and huſbandry.

In feaſt and ſacrifice my choſen train
Six days conſum'd; the ſeventh we plough'd the main.
Crete's ample fields diminiſh to our eye;
Before the Boreal blaſts the veſſels fly;
Safe thro' the level ſeas we ſweep our way;
The ſteer-man governs, and the ſhips obey.
The fifth fair morn we ſtem th' Ægyptian tide:
And tilting o'er the bay the veſſels ride:
To anchor there my fellows I command,
And ſpies commiſſion to explore the land.
But ſway'd by luſt of gain, and headlong will,
The coaſts they ravage, and the natives kill.
The ſpreading clamour to their city flies,
And horſe and foot in mingled tumult riſe.
The red'ning dawn reveals the circling fields
Horrid with briſtly ſpears, and glancing ſhields.
Jove thunder'd on their ſide. Our guilty head
We turn'd to flight; the gathering vengeance ſpread
On all parts round, and heaps on heaps lie dead.
I then explor'd my thought, what courſe to prove?
(And ſure the thought was dictated by Jove,
Oh had he left me to that happier doom,
And ſav'd a life of miſeries to come!)
The radiant helmet from my brows unlac'd,
And low on earth my ſhield and javelin caſt,
I meet the monarch with a ſuppliant's face,
Approach his chariot, and his knees embrace.

He heard, he ſav'd, he plac'd me at his ſide;
My ſtate he pity'd, and my tears he dry'd,
Reſtrain'd the rage the vengeful foe expreſt,
And turn'd the deadly weapons from my breaſt.
Pious! to guard the hoſpitable rite,
And fearing Jove, whom mercy's works delight.

In Ægypt thus with peace and plenty bleſt,
I liv'd (and happy ſtill had liv'd) a gueſt,
On ſev'n bright years ſucceſſive bleſſings wait;
The next chang'd all the colour of my fate.
A falſe Phœnician of inſiduous mind,
Vers'd in vile arts, and foe to humankind,
With ſemblance fair invites me to his home;
I ſeiz'd the proffer (ever fond to roam)
Domeſtick in his faithleſs roof I ſtay'd,
'Till the ſwift ſun his annual circle made.
To Lybia then he meditates the way;
With guileful art a ſtranger to betray,
And ſell to bondage in a foreign land:
Much doubting, yet compell'd, I quit the ſtrand.
Thro' the mid ſeas the nimble pinnace ſails,
Aloof from Crete, before the northern gales:
But when remote her chalky cliffs we loſt,
And far from ken of any other coaſt,
When all was wild expanſe of ſea and air;
Then doom'd high Jove due vengeance to prepare,
He hung a night of horrours o'er their head,
(The ſhaded ocean blacken'd as it ſpread)

He lanch'd the fiery bolt; from pole to pole
Broad burſt the lightnings, deep the thunders roll;
In giddy rounds the whirling ſhip is toſt,
And all in clouds of ſmoth'ring ſulphur loſt.
As from a hanging rock's remendous height,
The ſable crows with intercepted flight
Drop endlong; ſcarr'd and black with ſulph'rous hue:
So from the deck are hurl'd the ghaſtly crew.
Such end the wicked found! But Jove's intent
Was yet to ſave th' oppreſt and innocent.
Plac'd on the maſt (the laſt recourſe of life)
With winds and waves I held unequal ſtrife;
For nine long days the billows tilting o'er,
The tenth ſoft wafts me to Theſprotia's ſhore.
The monarch's ſon a ſhepwreckt wretch reliev'd,
The ſire with hoſpitable rites receiv'd,
And in his palace like a brother plac'd,
With gifts of price and gorgeous garments grac'd.
While here I ſojourn'd, oft' I heard the fame
How late Ulyſſes to the country came,
How lov'd, how honour'd in this court he ſtay'd,
And here his whole collected treaſure lay'd;
I ſaw myſelf the vaſt unnumber'd ſtore
Of ſteel elab'rate, and refulgent ore,
And braſs high heap'd amidſt the regal dome;
Immenſe ſupplies for ages yet to come!

Meantime he voyag'd to explore the will
Of Jove on high Dodona's holy hill,

v. 363 — — *He voyag'd to explore the will*
Of Jove on high Dodona's holy hill.]

Theſe oaks of Dodona were held to be oraculous, and to be endued with ſpeech, by the antients; and pigeons were ſuppoſed to be the prieſteſſes of the Deity. Herodotus in Euterpe gives a full account of what belongs to this oracle, who tells us, that he was informed by the prieſteſſes of Dodona, that two black pigeons flew away from Thebes in Egypt, and one of them perching upon a tree in Dodona, admoniſhed the inhabitants with a human voice, to erect an oracle in that place to Jupiter. But Herodotus ſolves this fable after the following manner: "There were two prieſteſſes carried away from Ægypt, "and one of them was ſold by the Phœnicians in Greece, "where ſhe in her ſervitude conſecrated an altar to Ju-"piter under an oak; the Dodonæans gave her the "name of a pigeon becauſe ſhe was a barbarian, and her "ſpeech at firſt no more underſtood than the chattering "of a bird or pigeon; but as ſoon as ſhe had learned "the Greek tongue, it was preſently reported that the "pigeon ſpoke with an human voice. She had the epi-"thet *Black*, becauſe ſhe was an Ægyptian."

Euſtathius informs us, that Dodona was antiently a city of Theſprotia; and in proceſs of time the limits of it being changed, it became of the country of the Moloſſians, that is, it lay between Theſſaly and Epirus. Near this city was a mountain named Timarus or Timourus: on this mountain there ſtood a temple, and within the precincts of it were theſe oraculous oaks of Jupiter: this was the moſt antient temple of Greece, according to Herodotus, founded by the Pelaſgians, and at firſt ſerved by prieſts called Selli; and the Goddeſs Dione being joined with Jupiter in the worſhip, the ſervice was performed by three

What means might beſt his ſafe return avail, 365
To come in pomp, or bear a ſecret ſail?

aged prieſteſſes, called in the Moloſſian tongue πέλειαι, as old men were called πέλειοι, (perhaps from the corrupted word πάλαιοι, or antients) and the ſame word πέλειαι ſignifying alſo pigeons, gave occaſion to the fable of the temple of Dodona having doves for prieſteſſes. But if, as Herodotus affirms, the Phœnicians ſold this prieſteſs of Jupiter originally to the Greeks, it is probable they were called doves, after the Phœnician language, in which the ſame word, with a ſmall alteration, ſignifies both a dove and a prieſteſs. See note on v. 75. of the twelfth Odyſſey.

Euſtathius gives us another ſolution of this difficulty, and tells us, that as there were κοραξομάντεις, or *augurs*, who drew predictions from the flight and geſtures of crows; ſo there were others who predicted from obſervations made upon doves; and from hence theſe doves were called the propheteſſes of Dodona, that being the way by which the decrees of the Gods were diſcovered by the augurs.

I have remarked that the temple of Dodona ſtood upon the mountain Timourus; hence the word τίμυρα came to ſignify thoſe oracles. and thus τίμυρος is uſed by Lycophron. Now Homer in another place writes,

Εἴ γε μὲν αἰνήσουσι Διὸς μεγάλοιο Θέμιστες.

Strabo therefore, inſtead of Θέμιστες, reads τίμυρα; for, obſerves that author, the oracles, not the laws of Jupiter, are preſerved at Dodona. *Euſtathius.*

But whence aroſe the fable of theſe oaks being vocal? I doubt not but this was an illuſion of thoſe who gave out the oracles to the people: they concealed themſelves within the cavities or hollow of the oaks, and from thence delivered their oracles; and impoſing by this method upon the ſuperſtition and credulity of thoſe ages, perſuaded the world that the Gods gave a voice and utterance to the oaks.

Full oft' has Phidon, whilſt he pour'd the wine,
Atteſting ſolemn all the Pow'rs divine,
That ſoon Ulyſſes would return, declar'd,
The ſailors waiting, and the ſhips prepar'd.
But firſt the king diſmiſs'd me from his ſhores,
For fair Dulichium crown'd with fruitful ſtores;
To good Acaſtus' friendly care conſign'd:
But other counſels pleas'd the ſailors mind:
New frauds were plotted by the faithleſs train,
And miſery demands me once again.
Soon as remote from ſhore they plough the wave,
With ready hands they ruſh to ſeize their ſlave;
Then with theſe tatter'd rags they wrapt me round,
(Stript of my own) and to the veſſel bound.
At eve, at Ithaca's delightful land
The ſhip arriv'd: forth-iſſuing on the ſand
They ſought repaſt; while to th' unhappy kind,
The pitying Gods themſelves my chains unbind.
Soft I deſcended, to the ſea apply'd
My naked breaſt, and ſhot along the tide.
Soon paſt beyond their ſight, I left the flood,
And took the ſpreading ſhelter of the wood.
Their prize eſcap'd the faithleſs pirates mourn'd;
But deem'd enquiry vain, and to their ſhip returned.

I refer the reader, for a larger account of theſe Dodonæan oracles, to the annotations upon book xvi. verſe 285. of the Iliad.

Screen'd by protecting Gods from hoſtile eyes,
They led me to a good man and a wiſe;
To live beneath thy hoſpitable care,
And wait the woes Heav'n dooms me yet to bear.

v. 391. *Screen'd by protecting Gods from hoſtile eyes,*
They led me to a good man and a wiſe.]

This is a very artful compliment which Ulyſſes pays to Eumæus: *The Gods guided me to the habitation of a perſon of wiſdom*, and names not Eumæus, leaving it to him to apply it.

I doubt not but the reader agrees with Ulyſſes as to the character of Eumæus; there is an air of piety to the Gods in all he ſpeaks, and benevolence to mankind; he is faithful to his king, upright in his truſt, and hoſpitable to the ſtranger.

Dacier is of opinion, that ἀνδρὸς ἐπιστα μένοιο takes in virtue as well as wiſdom; and indeed Homer frequently joins νήμονες ἠδὲ δίκαιοι, and ἀδαήμονες οὐδὲ δίκαιοι; that is, wiſdom and virtue, folly and impiety, throughout the Odyſſey. *For never, never wicked man was wiſe.* Virtue in a great meaſure depends upon education: it is a ſcience, and may be learned like other ſciences; in reality, there is no knowledge that deſerves the name without virtue; if virtue be wanting, ſcience becomes artifice: as Plato demonſtrates from Homer; who, though he is an enemy to this poet, has enriched his writings with his ſentiments.

v. 394. *And wait the woes Heav'n dooms me yet to bear.*]
It may not perhaps be unſatisfactory to ſee how Ulyſſes keeps in ſight of truth through this whole fabulous ſtory.

He gives a true account of his being at the war of Troy; he ſtays ſeven years in Ægypt, ſo long he continued with Calypſo; the king of Ægypt, whoſe name Eu-

Unhappy gueſt! whoſe ſorrows touch my mind!
(Thus good Eumæus with a ſigh rejoin'd)
For real ſuff'rings ſince I grieve ſincere,
Check not with fallacies the ſpringing tear;
Nor turn the paſſion into groundleſs joy
For him, whom Heav'n has deſtin'd to deſtroy.
Oh! had he periſht on ſome well-fought day,
Or in his friends embraces dy'd away!
That grateful Greece with ſtreaming eyes might raiſe
Hiſtorick marbles, to record his praiſe:

ſtathius tells us was Sethon, according to the antients, entertains him hoſpitably like that Goddeſs; a Phœnician detains him a whole year; the ſame has been obſerved of Circe; the veſſel of this Phœnician is loſt by a ſtorm, and all the crew periſhes except Ulyſſes: the ſame is true of all the companions of Ulyſſes. He is thrown upon the land of the Theſprotians by that tempeſt, and received courteouſly by Phidon, the king of that country; this repreſents his being caſt upon the Phæacian ſhore by the ſtorm, and the hoſpitable Phidon means Alcinous, king of the Phæacians: the manner likewiſe of his being introduced to Phidon, agrees with his introduction to Alcinous; the daughter introduces him to Alcinous, and the ſon to Phidon. Thus we ſee there is a *concordia diſcors* through the whole narration, the poet only changing the names of perſons and places. Ulyſſes lay under an abſolute neceſſity thus to falſify his true hiſtory, and repreſent himſelf as a ſtranger to the whole Iſland of Ithaca, otherwiſe it would have been natural for Eumæus to offer to guide him to his friends, upon which a diſcovery muſt inevitably have followed, which would have proved fatal to that hero.

His praiſe, eternal on the faithful ſtone,
Had with tranſmiſſive honours grac'd his ſon.
Now ſnatch'd by harpies to the dreary coaſt,
Sunk is the hero, and his glory loſt!
While penſive in this ſolitary den,
Far from gay cities, and the ways of men,
I linger life; nor to the court repair,
But when the conſtant queen commands my care;

v. 407. *Now ſnatch'd by harpies — —*] This place ſeems to evince, that the expreſſion of being torn by the harpies, means that the dead perſon is deprived of the rites of ſepulture; and not as Dacier underſtands it, that he is diſappeared, or that it is unknown what is become of him: for the whole lamentation of Eumæus turns upon this point, namely, that Ulyſſes is dead, and deprived of the funeral ceremonies.

v. 411. *— — Nor to the court repair,*
But when the queen — —]

It may appear, at firſt view, as if Eumæus thought his abſence from the court an aggravation to his calamities: but this is not his meaning: he ſpeaks thus to prevent Ulyſſes from aſking him to introduce him immediately to Penelope; and this is the reaſon why he enlarges upon the ſtory of the Ætolian, who had deceived him by raiſing his immediate expectations of the return of Ulyſſes.

It is remarkable, that almoſt all theſe fictions are made by Cretans, or have ſome relation to the iſland of the Cretans: thus Ulyſſes feigns himſelf to be of Crete, and this Ætolian lays the ſcene of his falſhood in the ſame iſland: which, as Euſtathius obſerves, may poſſibly be a latent ſatyr upon that people, who were become a reproach and proverb for their remarkable lying. This agrees exactly

Or when, to taſte her hoſpitable board,
Some gueſt arrives, with rumours of her lord;
And theſe indulge their want, and thoſe their woe,
And here the tears, and there the goblets flow.
By many ſuch I have been warn'd; but chief
By one Ætolian robb'd of all belief,
Whoſe hap it was to this our roof to roam,
For murder baniſh'd from his native home,
He ſwore, Ulyſſes on the coaſt of Crete
Staid but a ſeaſon to refit his fleet;

with the character given them by St. Paul from Epimenides.

Κρῆτες ἀεὶ ψεῦσαι.

And κρητίζειν ſignifies to *lie*.

St. Chryſoſtom fills up the broken verſe thus,

— — ἡ γὰρ τάφον, ὦ ἄνα, σεῖο
Κρῆτες ἐτεκμήναντο, σὺ δ' οὐ θάνες, ἐσσὶ γὰρ αἰεί.

But this is added from Callimachus in his hymn to Jupiter, thus tranſlated by Mr. Prior,

The Cretan boaſts thy natal place: but oft',
He meets reproof deſerv'd: for he preſumptuous
Has built a tomb for thee, who never know'ſt
To die, but liv'ſt the ſame to day and ever.

That the latter part of theſe verſes belongs to Epimenides, is evident, for St. Paul quotes the verſe thus:

Κρῆτες ἀεὶ ψεῦσαι, κακὰ θηρία,

The two laſt words are not in Callimachus, and conſequently the reſt is only a conjectural and erroneous addition.

A few revolving months ſhou'd waft him o'er,
Fraught with bold warriours, and a boundleſs ſtore.
O thou! whom age has taught to underſtand,
And Heav'n has guided with a fav'ring hand!
On God or mortal to obtrude a lie
Forbear, and dread to flatter, as to die.
Not for ſuch ends my houſe and heart are free,
But dear reſpect to Jove, and charity.
And why, oh ſwain of unbelieving mind!
(Thus quick reply'd the wiſeſt of mankind)
Doubt you my oath? yet more my faith to try,
A ſolemn compact let us ratify,
And witneſs ev'ry Pow'r that rules the ſky!
If here Ulyſſes from his labours reſt,
Be then my prize a tunick and a veſt;
And, where my hopes invite me, ſtraight tranſport
In ſafety to Dulichium's friendly court.
But if he greets not thy deſiring eye,
Hurl me from yon' dread precipice on high;
The due reward of fraud and perjury.
Doubtleſs, oh gueſt! great laud and praiſe were mine
(Reply'd the ſwain for ſpotleſs faith divine)
If, after ſocial rites and gifts beſtow'd,
I ſtain'd my hoſpitable hearth with blood,
How would the Gods my righteous toils ſucceed,
And bleſs the hand that made a ſtranger bleed?
No more—th' approaching hours of ſilent night
Firſt claim refection, then to reſt invite;

Beneath our humble cottage let us haſte,
And here, unenvy'd, rural dainties taſte.
Thus commun'd theſe; while to their lowly dome
The full-fed ſwine return'd with evening home;
Compell'd, reluctant, to their ſev'ral ſties,
With din obſtrep'rous, and ungrateful cries.
Then to the ſlaves—Now from the herd the beſt
Select, in honour of our foreign gueſt:
With him, let us the genial banquet ſhare,
For great and many are the griefs we bear;
While thoſe who from our labours heap their board,
Blaſpheme their feeder, and forget their lord.

v. 455. *Compell'd, reluctant, to their ſev'ral ſties,*
With din obſtrep'rous, and ungrateful cries.]

There is ſcarce a more ſonorous verſe in the whole Odyſſey.

Κλαγγὴ δ' ἀσπερχὲς ὄρτο συῶν αὐλιζομενάων.

The word ſwine is what debaſes our idea; which is evident, if we ſubſtitute *Shepherd* in the room of *Hogherd*, and apply to it the moſt pompous epithet given by Homer to Eumæus. For inſtance, to ſay δῖος, or the illuſtrious hogherd is mean enough: but the image is more tolerable when we ſay, the illuſtrious ſhepherd; the office of a ſhepherd (eſpecially as it is familiarized and dignified in poetry by the frequent uſe of it) being in repute. The Greeks have magnificent words to expreſs the moſt common objects: we want words of equal dignity, and have the diſadvantage of being obliged to endeavour to raiſe a ſubject that is now in the utmoſt contempt, ſo as to guard it from meanneſs and ignominy.

Thus ſpeaking, with diſpatchful hand he took
A weighty ax, and cleft the ſolid oak;
This on the earth he pil'd; a boar full fed
Of five years age, before the pile was led:
The ſwain, whom acts of piety delight,
Obſervant of the Gods begins the rite;
Firſt ſhears the forehead of the briſtly boar,
And ſuppliant ſtands, invoking ev'ry Pow'r
To ſpeed Ulyſſes to his native ſhore.

v. 469. *Firſt ſhears the forehead of the briſtly boar.*] I have already obſerved, that every meal among the antients was a kind of ſacrifice and thankſgiving to the Gods; and the table, as it were, an altar.

This ſacrifice being different from any other in Homer, I will fully deſcribe the particulars of it from Euſtathius. It is a rural ſacrifice; we have before ſeen ſacrifices in camps, in courts, and in cities, in the Iliad; but this is the only one of this nature in all Homer.

They cut off the hair of the victim in commemoration of the original way of cloathing, which was made of hair and the ſkins of beaſts.

Eumæus ſtrows flour upon it; in remembrance, that before incenſe was in uſe, this was the antient manner of offering to the Gods, or as Dacier obſerves, of conſecrating the victim, inſtead of the barley mixed with ſalt, which had the name of immolation.

Eumæus cut a piece from every part of the victim; by this he made it an *holocauſt*, or an entire ſacrifice.

Eumæus divides the reſt at ſupper; which was always the office of the moſt honourable perſon; and thus we ſee Achilles and other heroes employed throughout the Iliad. He portions it into ſeven parts; one he allots to Mercury

A knotty ſtake then aiming at his head,
Down dropp'd he groaning, and the ſpirit fled.
The ſcorching flames climb round on ev'ry ſide:
Then the ſindg'd members they with ſkill divide;
On theſe, in rolls of fat involv'd with art,
The choiceſt morſels lay from ev'ry part.
Some in the flames beſtrow'd with flour, they threw:
Some cut in fragments, from the forks they drew;
Theſe while on ſev'ral tables they diſpoſe,
As prieſt himſelf the blameleſs ruſtick roſe;
Expert the deſtin'd victim to diſ-part
In ſev'n juſt portions, pure of hand and heart.
One ſacred to the Nymphs apart they lay;
Another to the winged ſon of May:

and the Nymphs, and the reſt he reſerves for himſelf, Ulyſſes, and his four ſervants. He gives the chine to Ulyſſes, which was ever reputed an honour and diſtinction; thus Ajax after a victory over Hector, is rewarded in the ſame manner.

Νώτοισι δ' Αἴαντα διηνεκέσσι γέραιρεν.
Ἀτρείδης.

v. 484. *One ſacred to the Nymphs — —*
Another to the winged ſon of May.]

It may be aſked why Eumæus allots part of the victim to Mercury and the Nymphs, ſince there is nothing of the like nature to be found in the whole Iliad and Odyſſey? This is done in compliance to the place and perſon of Eumæus, whoſe employment lies in the country, and

The rural tribe in common ſhare the reſt,
The king the chine, the honour of the feaſt,
Who ſat delighted at his ſervant's board;
The faithful ſervant joy'd his unknown lord.
Oh be thou dear, (Ulyſſes cry'd) to Jove,
As well thou claim'ſt a grateful ſtranger's love!
Be then thy thanks, (the bounteous ſwain reply'd)
Enjoyment of the good the Gods provide.

who has the care of the herds of Ulyſſes; he therefore offers to the Nymphs, as they are the preſidents of the fountains, rivers, groves, and furniſh ſuſtenance and food for cattle: and Mercury was held by the antients to be the patron of ſhepherds. Thus Simonides,

Θύειν Νύμφαις ἠδ Μαιάδι τέκνῳ
Οἵτοι γὰρ ἀνδρῶν αἷμα ἴχνσι ποιμαίνων.

Euſtathius adds, (from whom this is taken) that Mercury was a lucrative God, and therefore Eumæus ſacrifices to him for increaſe of his herds: or becauſe he was δόλιος ἑρμῆς, and, like Ulyſſes, maſter of all the arts of cunning and diſſimulation, and then Eumæus may be underſtood to offer to him for the ſafety of Ulyſſes, that he might furniſh him with artifice to bring him in ſecurity to his country; and we ſee this agrees with his prayer.

What Dacier adds is yet more to the purpoſe. Eumæus joins Mercury with the Nymphs becauſe he was patron of flocks, and the antients generally placed the figure of a ram at the baſe of his images; ſometimes he is repreſented carrying a ram upon his arms, ſometimes upon his ſhoulders: in ſhort it ſuffices that he was eſteemed a rural Deity, to make the ſacrifice proper to be offered to him by a perſon whoſe occupation lay in the country.

From God's own hand deſcend our joys and woes;
Theſe he decrees, and he but ſuffers thoſe:
All pow'r is his, and whatſoe'er he wills,
The will itſelf, omnipotent, fulfills.
This ſaid, the firſt-fruits to the Gods he gave;
Then pour'd of offer'd wine the ſable wave:
In great Ulyſſes' hand he plac'd the bowl,
He ſat, and ſweet refection chear'd his ſoul.
The bread from caniſters Meſaulius gave,
(Eumæus' proper treaſure bought this ſlave,
And led from Taphos, to attend his board,
A ſervant added to his abſent lord)

v. 504. — — *And led from Taphos.*] This cuſtom of purchaſing ſlaves prevailed over all the world, as appears not only from many places of Homer, but of the holy Scriptures, in which mention is made of ſlaves bought with money. The Taphians lived in a ſmall iſland adjacent to Ithaca: Mentes was king of it, as appears from the firſt of the Odyſſey: they were generally pirates, and are ſuppoſed to have had their name from their way of living, which in the Phœnician tongue (as Bochart obſerves) ſignifies rapine: *Hataph*, and by contraction *Taph*, bearing that ſignification.

Frequent uſe has been made of the Phœnician interpretations through the courſe of theſe notes, and perhaps it may be judged neceſſary to ſay ſomething why they may be ſuppoſed to give names to countries and perſons more than any other nation.

They are reported to be the inventors of letters, Lucan, lib. iii.

" Phœnices primi, famæ ſi creditur, auſi
" Manſuram rudibus vocem ſignare figuris."

His taſk it was the wheaten loaves to lay,
And from the banquet take the bowls away.
And now the rage of hunger was repreſt,
And each betakes him to his couch to reſt. 509

and were the greateſt navigators in the world. Dionyſius ſays they were the firſt,

Οἳ πρῶτοι νήεσσιν ἐπειρήσαντο θαλάσσης,
Πρῶτοι δ' ἐμπορίης ἀλιδινέα ἐμνήσαντο.

The firſt who uſed navigation, the firſt who trafficked by the ocean. If we put theſe two qualities together, it is no wonder that a great number of places were called by Phœnician names: for they being the firſt navigators, muſt neceſſarily diſcover a multitude of iſlands, countries, and cities, to which they would be obliged to give names when they deſcribed them. And nothing is ſo probable as that they gave thoſe names according to the obſervations they made upon the nature of the ſeveral countries, or employment of the inhabitants. In the preſent inſtance, the Taphians being remarkable pirates, as appears from Homer,

— — Τάφιοι λῃστορίῃ ἄνδρες
— — λῃϊζῆσιν ἐπισπόμενοι Ταφιῆσι.)

The Phœnicians, who firſt diſcovered this iſland, called it *Taph*, the Iſland of Pirates. Places receive appellations according to the language of the diſcoverer, and generally from obſervations made upon the people. It will add a weight to this ſuppoſition, if we remember that Homer was well acquainted with the traditions and cuſtoms of the Phœnicians; for he ſpeaks frequently of that people through the courſe of the Odyſſey.

Now came the night, and darkneſs cover'd o'er
The face of things; the winds began to roar;

v. 510. *Now came the night,* — —
— — *the winds began to roar*; &c.]

Euſtathius obſerves, that Homer introduces the following ſtory by a very artful connexion, and makes it, as it were, grow out of the ſubject: the coldneſs of the preſent ſeaſon brings to his mind a time like it, when he lay before Troy.

It is remarkable, that almoſt all poets have taken an opportunity to give long deſcriptions of the night; Virgil, Statius, Apollonius, Taſſo, and Dryden, have enlarged upon this ſubject: Homer ſeems induſtriouſly to have avoided it: perhaps he judged ſuch deſcriptions to be no more than excreſcencies, and at beſt but beautiful ſuperfluities. A modern hyper-critick thinks Mr. Dryden to have excelled all the poets in this point.

All things are huſh'd as nature's ſelf lay dead,
The mountains ſeem to nod their drowſy head, &c.

The laſt verſe is tranſlated from Statius,

" Et ſimulant feſſos curvata cacumina ſomnos."

which I mention only to propoſe it to conſideration, whether *cacumina* muſt, in this place, of neceſſity ſignify the tops of mountains; why may it not be applied, as it is frequently, to the tops of the trees? I queſtion whether the nodding of a mountain, or the appearance of its nodding, be a natural image: whereas if we underſtand it of the trees, the difficulty vaniſhes; and the meaning will be much more eaſy, that the very trees ſeem to nod, as in ſleep.

I beg the reader's patience to mention another verſe of Statius, that has been undoubtedly miſtaken.

The driving ſtorm the wat'ry weſt-wind pours,
And Jove deſcends in deluges of ſhow'rs.
Studious of reſt and warmth, Ulyſſes lies,
Foreſeeing from the firſt the ſtorm would riſe;
In mere neceſſity of coat and cloak,
With artful preface to his hoſt he ſpoke.
Hear me, my friends! who this good banquet grace;
'Tis ſweet to play the fool in time and place,

" Qualis ubi audito venantum murmure Tigris,
" Horruit in maculas." — —

Which Cowley renders,

— — he ſwells with angry pride,
And calls forth all his ſpots on ev'ry ſide.

In which ſenſe alſo the author of the Spectator quotes it from Cowley. But it is impoſſible to imagine that the hair of any creature can change into ſpots; and if any creature could change it by anger, would not the ſpots remain when the paſſion was over? The aſſertion is abſolutely againſt nature, and matter of fact; and as abſurd as to affirm that the hair of a tiger bluſhes. This miſtake ariſes from the double ſenſe of the word *maculæ*, which ſignifies alſo the *meſhes* of a *net*, as any common dictionary will inform us. So Tully, *Reticulum minutis maculis*; Columella, *Rete grandi macula*; Ovid, *Diſtinctum maculis rete*. This way the ſenſe is obvious: no wonder that a tiger, when incloſed in the toils, ſhould *horrere in maculis*, or erect his hair when he flies againſt the meſhes, endeavouring to eſcape; and it agrees with the nature of that animal, to roughen his hair when he is angry. I beg the reader's pardon for all this; but the mention of a hypercritick was infecting, and led me into it unawares.

And wine can of their wits the wiſe beguile,
Make the ſage frolick, and the ſerious ſmile,
The grave in merry meaſures friſk about,
And many a long-repented word bring out.
Since to be talkative I now commence,
Let wit caſt off the ſullen yoke of ſenſe.
Once I was ſtrong (wou'd Heav'n reſtore thoſe days)
And with my betters claim'd a ſhare of praiſe.
Ulyſſes, Menelaus led forth a band,
And join'd me with them, ('twas their own command;)
A deathful ambuſh for the foe to lay,
Beneath Troy walls by night we took our way:
There, clad in arms, along the marſhes ſpread,
We made the oſier-fringed bank our bed.
Full ſoon th' inclemency of Heav'n I feel,
Nor had theſe ſhoulders cov'ring, but of ſteel.
Sharp blew the north; ſnow whitening all the fields
Froze with the blaſt, and gath'ring glaz'd our ſhields.
There all but I, well fenc'd with cloak and veſt,
Lay cover'd by their ample ſhields at reſt.
Fool that I was! I left behind my own;
The ſkill of weather and of winds unknown,
And truſted to my coat and ſhield alone!

v. 540. *I left behind my cloak*, &c.] To underſtand this paſſage, we muſt remember, that in thoſe eaſtern regions, after very hot days an extream cold night would ſometimes ſucceed, even with froſt and ſnow, contrary to the

When now was waſted more than half the night,
And the ſtars faded at approaching light;
Sudden I jogg'd Ulyſſes, who was laid
Faſt by my ſide, and ſhiv'ring thus I ſaid:
Here longer in this field I cannot lie,
The winter pinches, and with cold I die,
And die aſham'd (oh wiſeſt of mankind)
The only fool who left his cloak behind.
He thought, and anſwer'd: hardly waking yet,
Sprung in his mind the momentary wit;
(That wit, which or in council, or in fight,
Still met th' emergence, and determin'd right)
Huſh thee, he cry'd, (ſoft-whiſp'ring in my ear)
Speak not a word, leſt any Greek may hear—
And then (ſupporting on his arm his head)
Hear me, companions! (thus aloud he ſaid)

uſual order of the ſeaſon. If it had been winter, no doubt Ulyſſes would have armed himſelf againſt the nocturnal cold, and not have been reduced to ſuch an extremity.

There is one incident in this ſtory that ſeems extraordinary: Ulyſſes and Menelaus are ſaid to form an ambuſh under the very walls of Troy, and yet are deſcribed to be ſleeping while they thus form it. The words are εὗδον ἐϊκτήλοι. Εὗδον does not neceſſarily ſignify to be aſleep, as is already proved from the concluſion of the firſt Iliad: but here it muſt have that import; for Ulyſſes tells his companions, that he has had an extraordinary dream. Beſides, even a tendency towards ſleep ſhould be avoided by ſoldiers in an ambuſcade, eſpecially by the leaders of it. The only anſwer that occurs to me is, that perhaps they had centinels waking while they ſlept; but even this would be unſoldier-like in our age.

Methinks too diſtant from the fleet we lie:
Ev'n now a viſion ſtood before my eye,
And ſure the warning viſion was from high:
Let from among us ſome ſwift courier riſe,
Haſte to the gen'ral and demand ſupplies.
Upſtarted Thoas ſtraight, Andræmon's ſon,
Nimbly he roſe, and caſt his garment down;
Inſtant, the racer vaniſh'd off the ground;
That inſtant, in his cloak I wrapt me round:
And ſafe I ſlept, till brightly dawning ſhone
The morn, conſpicuous on her golden throne
Oh were my ſtrength as then, as then my age!
Some friend would fence me from the winter's rage.
Ye tatter'd as I look, I challeng'd then
The honours and the offices of men:
Some maſter, or ſome ſervant would allow
A cloak and veſt—but I am nothing now!
Well haſt thou ſpoke (rejoin'd th' attentive ſwain)
Thy lips let fall no idle word or vain!
Nor garment ſhalt thou want, nor ought beſide,
Meet, for the wand'ring ſuppliant to provide.
But in the morning take thy cloaths again,
For here one veſt ſuffices ev'ry ſwain;

v. 581. *But in the morning take thy cloaths again.*] This is not ſpoken in vain; it was neceſſary for Ulyſſes to appear in the form of a beggar, to prevent diſcovery.

The word in the Greek is διπλοΐδιος, which it is impoſſible to tranſlate without a circumlocution. It paints (obſerves Euſtathius) exactly the dreſs of a beggar, and the difficulty he labours under in drawing his rags to cover one part of his body that is naked, and while he covers

No change of garments to our hinds is known:
But when return'd, the good Ulyſſes' ſon

that, leaving the other part bare: διεπαλίξεις is ταῖς παλάμαις δονήσεις or δινήσεις, and expreſſes how a beggar is embarraſſed in the act of covering his body, by reaſon of the rents in his cloaths.

v. 582. *For here one veſt ſuffices ev'ry ſwain.*] It is not at firſt view evident why Ulyſſes requeſts a change of raiment from Eumæus, for a better dreſs would only have expoſed him to the danger of a diſcovery. Beſides, this would have been a direct oppoſition to the injunctions of Goddeſs of Wiſdom, who had not only diſguiſed him in the habit of a beggar, but changed his features to a conformity with it. Why then ſhould he make this petition? The anſwer is, to carry on his diſguiſe the better before Eumæus; he has already told him that he was once a perſon of dignity, though now reduced to poverty by calamities: and conſequently a perſon who had once known better fortunes, would be uneaſy under ſuch mean circumſtances, and deſire to appear like himſelf; therefore he aſks a better dreſs, that Eumæus may believe his former ſtory.

What Eumæus ſpeaks of not having any changes of garments, is not a ſign of poverty, but of the ſimplicity of the manners of thoſe ages. It is the character of the luxurious vain Phæacians, to delight in changes of dreſs, and agrees not with this plain, ſincere, induſtrious Ithacan, Eumæus.

I wonder this laſt part of the relation of Ulyſſes has eſcaped the cenſure of the criticks: the circumſtance of getting the cloak of Thoas in the cold night, though it ſhews the artifice of Ulyſſes eſſential to his character, yet perhaps may be thought unworthy the majeſty of epick poetry, where every thing ought to be great and magnificent. It is of ſuch a nature as to raiſe a ſmile, rather

With better hand ſhall grace with fit attires
His gueſt, and ſend thee where thy ſoul deſires.
The honeſt herdſman roſe, as this he ſaid,
And drew before the hearth the ſtranger's bed:
The fleecy ſpoils of ſheep, a goat's rough hide
He ſpreads; and adds a mantle thick and wide;
With ſtore to heap above him, and below,
And guard each quarter as the tempeſts blow.
There lay the king, and all the reſt ſupine;
All, but the careful maſter of the ſwine:
Forth haſted he to tend his briſtly care:
Well arm'd, and fenc'd againſt nocturnal air;

than admiration; and Virgil has utterly rejected ſuch levities. Perhaps it may be thought that Ulyſſes adapts himſelf to Eumæus, and endeavours to engage his favour by that piece of pleaſantry; yet this does not ſolve the objection, for Eumæus is not a perſon of a low character: no one in the Odyſſey ſpeaks with better ſenſe, or better morality. One would almoſt imagine that Homer was ſenſible of the weakneſs of this ſtory, he introduces it ſo artfully. He tells us in a ſhort preface, that wine unbends the moſt ſerious and wiſe perſon, and makes him laugh, dance, and ſpeak, without his uſual caution: and then he proceeds to the fable of his ambuſh before Troy. But no introduction can reconcile it to thoſe who think ſuch comick relations ſhould not at all be introduced into epick poetry.

v. 595. *Forth haſted he to tend his briſtly care.*] A French critick has been very ſevere upon this conduct of Eumæus. *The divine hogherd*, ſays he, *having given the divine Ulyſſes his ſupper, ſends him to ſleep with his hogs, that had white teeth.* When criticks find fault, they ought to

His weighty falchion o'er his ſhoulder ty'd:
His ſhaggy cloak a mountain goat ſupply'd:
With his broad ſpear, the dread of dogs and men,
He ſeeks his lodging in the rocky den.
There to the tuſky herd he bends his way,
Where ſcreen'd from Boreas, high o'er-arch'd they lay.

take care that they impute nothing to an author but what the author really ſpeaks, otherwiſe it is not criticiſm, but calumny and ignorance. Monſieur Perrault is here guilty of both, for Ulyſſes ſleeps in the houſe of Eumæus, and Eumæus retires to take care of his charge, not to ſleep, but to watch with them.

This and the preceding book take up no more than the ſpace of one day. Ulyſſes lands in the morning, which is ſpent in conſultation with Minerva how to bring about his reſtoration. About noon he comes to Eumæus, for immediately after his arrival they dine: they paſs the afternoon and evening in conference: ſo that thirty-five days are exactly completed ſince the beginning of the Odyſſey.

THE FIFTEENTH BOOK OF THE ODYSSEY.

THE
ARGUMENT.

The Return of Telemachus.

THE Goddeſs Minerva commands Telemachus in a viſion to return to Ithaca. Piſiſtratus and he take leave of Menelaus, and arrive at Pylos, where they part; and Telemachus ſets ſail, after having received on board Theoclymenus the ſoothſayer. The ſcene then changes to the cottage of Eumæus, who entertains Ulyſſes with a recital of his adventures. In the mean time Telemachus arrives on the coaſt, and ſending the veſſel to the town, proceeds by himſelf to the lodge of Eumæus.

THE

* FIFTEENTH BOOK

OF THE

ODYSSEY.

Now had Minerva reach'd thoſe ample plains,
Fam'd for the dance, where Menelaüs reigns;
Anxious ſhe flies to great Ulyſſes' heir,
His inſtant voyage challeng'd all her care.

* Neither this book, nor indeed ſome of the following, are to be reckoned among the moſt ſhining parts of the Odyſſey. They are narrative, and generally low; yet natural, and juſt enough, conſidering Homer was reſolved to deſcribe and follow low life ſo very minutely. This great poet here reſembles an evening ſun; he has not the ſame heat or brightneſs; there are ſeveral little clouds about him, though in ſome places gilded and adorned; however, to make us amends, he breaks out again before the concluſion of his courſe, and ſets at laſt in glory.

There is no doubt, but all the parts of a poem are not capable of equal luſtre; nay, they ought not to dazzle us alike, or tire us by a perpetual ſtrain upon the imagination. But in theſe cooler relations a tranſlator has a hard taſk: he is expected to *ſhine*, where the author is *not bright*: and the unreaſonable critick demands a copy more noble than the original. It is true, theſe are the paſſages of which he ought to take particular care, and to ſet them

Beneath the royal portico diſplay'd,
With Neſtor's ſon, Telemachus was lay'd;

off to the beſt advantage: but however he may poliſh a vulgar ſtone, it will ſtill retain its inherent degree of cloudineſs; and the man is ignorant indeed, who thinks one can make it a diamond.

The ſtory now turns to Telemachus, and the poet briefly deſcribes his voyage to his country: there is a neceſſity to be conciſe, for the hero of an epick poem is never to be out of ſight, after his introduction. The little time that Homer employs in the return of Telemachus is not ſpent unuſefully by Ulyſſes; during this interval, he learns the ſtate of his publick and domeſtick affairs from Eumæus, and prepares the way for the deſtruction of the ſuitors, the chief deſign of the whole Odyſſey. There is another reaſon why the poet ought not to dwell at large upon the ſtory of Telemachus; he bears but an incidental relation to the Odyſſey, and conſequently Homer was neceſſitated to paſs over his actions with brevity, that he might deſcribe the hero of his poem at full length. It has been objected, that no mention has been made of any action at all of Telemachus during his whole ſtay with Menelaus, and that he lies there idly, without making his voyage contribute any thing to the reſtitution of Ulyſſes; but from the former obſervation it is evident, that this ſilence in the poet proceeds from judgment; nothing is to be inſerted in an epick poem but what has ſome affinity with the main deſign of it: but what affinity could the actions of Telemachus in the Spartan court have with thoſe of Ulyſſes? This would have been to make two heroes in one poem, and would have broken the unity of the action; whereas by the contrary conduct Homer unites the two ſtories, and makes the voyage of Telemachus ſubſervient to the chief action; namely, the reſtitution of Ulyſſes. Telemachus undertakes a voyage to make enquiry after Ulyſſes; this the poet fully deſcribes, becauſe

In ſleep profound the ſon of Neſtor lies;
Not thine, Ulyſſes! Care unſeal'd his eyes:

it has an immediate relation to Ulyſſes; but paſſes over all other adventures during the abſence of Telemachus, becauſe they have no relation to the deſign.

I know it has been objected, that the whole ſtory of Telemachus is foreign to the Odyſſey, and that the four firſt books have not a ſufficient connexion with the reſt of the poem, and therefore that there is a double action: but this objection will ceaſe, if it be made appear, that this voyage contributes to the reſtoration of Ulyſſes; for whatever incident has ſuch an effect, is united to the ſubject and eſſential to it. Now that this voyage has ſuch an effect is very evident; the ſuitors were ready to ſeize the throne of Ulyſſes, and compel his wife to marry; but by this voyage Telemachus breaks their whole deſigns. Inſtead of uſurping the throne, they are obliging to defend themſelves: they defer their purpoſe, and waſte much time in endeavouring to intercept him in his return. By this method leiſure is gained from the violence and addreſſes of the ſuitors, till Ulyſſes returns and brings about his own re eſtabliſhment. This voyage therefore is the ſecret ſource from which all the happineſs of Ulyſſes flows: for had not Telemachus ſailed to Pyle, Penelope muſt have been compelled to marry, and the throne of Ulyſſes uſurped. I have been more large upon this objection, becauſe many foreign criticks lay great weight upon it. See note on v. 110 of the firſt book.

There has lately been a great diſpute amongſt the French, concerning the length of the ſtay of Telemachus from his country. The debate is not very material, nor is it very difficult to ſettle that point. Telemachus ſailed from Ithaca in the evening of the ſecond day, and returns to it on the thirty-eighth in the morning, ſo that he is abſent thirty-five days compleatly.

Reſtleſs he griev'd, with various fears oppreſt,
And all thy fortunes roll'd within his breaſt. 10

v. 1. *Now had Minerva*, &c.] If this had been related by an hiſtorian, he would have only ſaid that Telemachus judged it neceſſary for his affairs to ſail back to his own country; but a poet ſteps out of the common beaten road, aſcribes the wiſdom of that hero to the Goddeſs of it, and introduces her in perſon, to give a dignity to his poetry.

The reader may conſult in general the extracts from Boſſu, (placed before the Odyſſey) concerning machines, or the interpoſition of Deities in epick poetry. I will here beg leave to ſet them in a different and more particular light.

It has been imagined that a Deity is never to be introduced but when all human means are ineffectual: if this were true, Minerva would be in vain employed in bringing Telemachus back, when a common meſſenger might have anſwered that purpoſe as well as the Goddeſs. I doubt not but the verſe of Horace has led many into this r ror:

"Nec Deus interſit niſi dignus vindice nodus."

This rule is to be applied only to the Theatre, of which Horace there ſpeaks, and means no more, than when the knot of the play is to be united, and no other way is left for making the diſcovery, then let a God deſcend and clear the intricacy to the auditors. But, as Mr. Dryden obſerves, it has no relation to epick poetry.

It is true, that a Deity is never to be introduced upon little and unworthy occaſions; the very deſign of machines is to add weight and dignity to the ſtory, and conſequently an unworthy employment defeats the very intent of them, and debaſes the Deities by making them act in offices unworthy of the characters of divine perſonages: but then it is as true, that a poet is at liberty to uſe them for ornament as well as neceſſity. For inſtance, both Virgil

When, O Telemachus! (the Goddeſs ſaid)
Too long in vain, too widely haſt thou ſtray'd.
Thus leaving careleſs thy paternal right
The robbers prize, the prey to lawleſs might.
On fond purſuits neglectful while you roam,
Ev'n now, the hand of rapine ſacks the dome.

and Homer in their deſcriptions of ſtorms introduce Deities, Neptune and Æolus, only to fill our minds with grandeur and terror; for in reality a ſtorm might have happened without a miracle, and Æneas and Ulyſſes both have been driven upon unknown ſhores, by a common ſtorm as well as by the immediate interpoſition of Neptune or Æolus. But machines have a very happy effect; the poet ſeems to converſe with Gods, gives ſigns of a divine tranſport, and diſtinguiſhes his poem in all parts from an hiſtory.

v. 5. *Beneath the royal portico*, &c.] Minerva here finds Telemachus in bed: it is neceſſary to remember that Ulyſſes landed in Ithaca in the morning of the thirty-fifth day; and when Minerva left him, ſhe went to the Spartan court to Telemachus; this viſion therefore appears to that hero in the night following the thirty-fifth day. On the thirty-ſixth he departs from Menelaus, and lodges that night with Diocles; on the thirty-ſeventh he embarks towards the evening, ſails all night, and lands on the thirty-eighth in the morning in his own country. From this obſervation it is likewiſe evident, that Ulyſſes paſſes two days in diſcourſe with Eumæus, though the poet only diſtinguiſhes the time by the voyage of Telemachus; for the preceding book concludes with the thirty-fifth day, and Telemachus ſpends the thirty-ſixth and thirty-ſeventh and the following night in his return, and meets Ulyſſes in the morning of the thirty-eighth day. This remark is neceſſary to avoid confuſion, and to make the two ſtories

Hence to Atrides; and his leave implore
To launch thy veſſel for thy natal ſhore;
Fly, whilſt thy mother virtuous yet withſtands
Her kindred's wiſhes, and her ſire's commands;
Thro' both, Eurymachus purſues the dame,
And with the nobleſt gifts aſſerts his claim.

of Ulyſſes and Telemachus coincide, in this and the next book of the Odyſſey.

v. 20. *Her kindred's wiſhes, and her ſire's commands.*] Ovid had theſe lines in his view in his Epiſtle of Penelope to Ulyſſes.

" Me pater Icarius viduo decedere lecto
" Cogit, & immenſas increpat uſque moras."

But why ſhould Minerva make uſe of theſe arguments, to perſuade Telemachus to return immediately; and give him no information concerning the ſafety of Ulyſſes, who was now actually landed in his own country? The poet reſerves this diſcovery to be made in the future part of the ſtory: if Telemachus had known of his father's being already returned, there could have been no room for the beautiful interview between the father and the ſon; for the doubts and fears, the ſurpriſe and filial tenderneſs, on the part of Telemachus; and for the paternal fondneſs, the yearnings of nature, and the tranſports of joy, on the part of Ulyſſes. Ariſtotle particularly commends this conduct of Homer with reſpect to Ulyſſes. Theſe diſguiſes and concealments (ſays that author) perplex the fable with agreeable plots and intricacies, ſurpriſe us with a variety of incidents, and give room for the relation of many adventures; while Ulyſſes ſtill appears in aſſumed characters, and upon every occaſion recites a new hiſtory. At the ſame time the poet excellently ſuſtains his character, which is every where diſtinguiſhed by a wiſe and ready diſſimulation.

Hence therefore, while thy ſtores thy own remain
Thou know'ſt the practice of the female train,
Loſt in the children of the preſent ſpouſe
They ſlight the pledges of their former vows;
Their love is always with the lover paſt;
Still the ſucceeding flame expells the laſt.
Let o'er thy houſe ſome choſen maid preſide,
'Till heav'n decrees to bleſs thee in a bride.
But now thy more attentive ears incline,
Obſerve the warnings of a Pow'r divine:
For thee their ſnares the ſuitor lords ſhall lay
In Samos ſands, or ſtraits of Ithaca,

v. 24. *Thou know'ſt the practice of the female train.*] This is not ſpoken in derogation of Penelope, nor applied to her in particular; it is laid down as an univerſal maxim, and uttered by the Goddeſs of Wiſdom: but (ſays Madam Dacier) I wiſh the poet had told us, if the huſbands in his days had better memories toward their departed wives. But what advantage would this be to the fair ſex, if we allow that an huſband may poſſibly forget a former wife? I chuſe rather to congratulate the modern ladies, againſt whom there is not the leaſt objection of this nature. Is it not evident, that all our widows are utterly diſconſolate, appear many months in deep mourning? and whenever they are prevailed upon to a ſecond marriage, do they not chuſe out the ſtrongeſt, beſt built, and moſt vigorous youth of the nation? For what other reaſon but that ſuch conſtitutions may be a ſecurity againſt their ever feeling the like calamity again? What I have here ſaid ſhews that the world is well changed ſince the times of Homer; and however the race of man is dwindled and decayed ſince thoſe ages, yet it is a demonſtration that the modern ladies are not to blame for it.

To ſeize thy life ſhall lurk the murd'rous band,
E'er yet thy footſteps preſs thy native land.
No —— ſooner far their riot and their luſt
All cov'ring earth ſhall bury deep in duſt!
Then diſtant from the ſcatter'd iſlands ſteer,
Nor let the night retard thy full career;
Thy heavn'ly guardian ſhall inſtruct the gales
To ſmooth thy paſſage, and ſupply thy ſails:
And when at Ithaca thy labour ends,
Send to the town thy veſſel with the friends;
But ſeek thou firſt the maſter of the ſwine,
(For ſtill to thee his loyal thoughts incline)
There paſs the night: while he his courſe purſues
To bring Penelope the wiſh'd-for news,
That thou ſafe ſailing from the Pylian ſtrand
Art come to bleſs her in thy native land.
  Thus ſpoke the Goddeſs, and reſum'd her flight
To the pure regions of eternal light.
Meanwhile Piſiſtratus he gently ſhakes,
And with theſe words the ſlumb'ring youth awakes.
  Riſe, ſon of Neſtor! for the road prepare,
And join the harneſs'd courſers to the car.
  What cauſe, he cry'd, can juſtify our flight,
To tempt the dangers of forbidding night?
Here wait we rather, 'till approaching day
Shall prompt our ſpeed, and point the ready way.
Nor think of flight before the Spartan king
Shall bid farewel, and bounteous preſents bring;

Gifts, which to diſtant ages ſafely ſtor'd,
The ſacred act of friendſhip ſhall record.
Thus he. But when the dawn beſtreak'd the East,
The king from Helen roſe, and ſought his gueſt.
As ſoon as his approach the hero knew,
The ſplendid mantle round him firſt he threw,
Then o'er his ample ſhoulders whirl'd the cloak,
Reſpectful met the monarch, and beſpoke.
Hail, great Atrides, favour'd of high Jove!
Let not thy friends in vain for licence move.
Swift let us meaſure back the wat'ry way,
Nor check our ſpeed, impatient of delay.
If with deſire ſo ſtrong thy boſom glows,
Ill, ſaid the king, ſhou'd I thy wiſh oppoſe;
For oft' in others freely I reprove
The ill-tim'd efforts of officious love;
Who love too much, hate in the like extream,
And both the golden mean alike condemn.
Alike he thwarts the hoſpitable end,
Who drives the free, or ſtays the haſty friend;
True friendſhip's laws are by this rule expreſt,
Welcome the coming, ſpeed the parting gueſt.

v. 84. *Welcome the coming, ſpeed the parting gueſt.*] Homer has here laid together admirable precepts for ſocial life; the paſſage was much admired; Herodotus borrowed it, as we are informed by Euſtathius.

——— ——— ——— τραπέζῃ
Μειλίξαντ' ἀπόπεμψαι ἐπὰν ἐθέλωσι νέεσθαι.

Yet ſtay, my friends, and in your chariot take
The nobleſt preſents that our love can make:
Meantime commit we to our women's care
Some choice domeſtick viands to prepare;
The trav'ler riſing from the banquet gay,
Eludes the labours of the tedious way.
Then if a wider courſe ſhall rather pleaſe
Thro' ſpacious Argos, and the realms of Greece,
Atrides in his chariot ſhall attend;
Himſelf thy convoy to each royal friend.
No prince will let Ulyſſes' heir remove
Without ſome pledge, ſome monument of love:
Theſe will the caldron, theſe the tripod give,
From thoſe the well-pair'd mules we ſhall receive,
Or bowl emboſs'd whoſe golden figures live.
To whom the youth, for prudence fam'd, reply'd,
O monarch, care of Heav'n! thy people's pride!
No friend in Ithaca my place ſupplies,
No pow'rful hands are there, no watchful eyes:
My ſtores expos'd and fenceleſs houſe demand
The ſpeedieſt ſuccour from my guardian hand;
Leſt in a ſearch too anxious and too vain
Of one loſt joy, I loſe what yet remain.

But perhaps Euſtathius quoted by memory, or through inadvertency wrote down Herodotus for Theocritus, in whom theſe lines are to be found:

Μηδὲ ξεινοδόκον κακὸν ἔμμεναι, ἀλλὰ τραπέζᾳ
Μειλίξαντ' ἀπόπεμψαι, ἑπὴν ἰθέλωντι νίσσθαι.

His purpoſe when the gen'rous warriour heard,
He charg'd the houſhold cates to be prepar'd.
Now with the dawn, from his adjoining home,
Was Boethœdes Eteonus come;
Swift as the word he forms the riſing blaze,
And o'er the coals the ſmoking fragments lays.

v. 109. *He charg'd the houſhold cates to be prepar'd.*] It is in the original, *He commanded Helen and her maids* to do it. The moderns have blamed Menelaus for want of delicacy in commanding his queen to perform ſuch houſhold offices. I read ſuch paſſages with pleaſure, becauſe they are exact pictures of antient life: we may as well condemn the firſt inhabitants of the world for want of politeneſs, in living in tents and bowers, and not in palaces. This command of Menelaus agrees with thoſe manners, and with the patriarchal life. Gen. xviii. 6. *Abraham haſtened into his tent, and ſaid unto Sarah his wife, make ready quickly three meaſures of fine meal: knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth.*

I doubt not but the continual deſcriptions of entertainments have likewiſe given offence to many; but we may be in ſome degree reconciled to them, if we conſider they are not only inſtances of the hoſpitality of the antients, but of their piety and religion: every meal was a religious act, a ſacrifice, or a feaſt of thankſgiving: libations of wine, and offerings of part of the fleſh, were conſtantly made at every entertainment. This gives a dignity to the deſcription, and when we read it, we are not to conſider it as an act merely of eating or drinking, but as an office of worſhip to the Gods.

This is a note of the criticks; but perhaps the ſame thing might as well be ſaid of our modern entertainments, wherever the good practice of ſaying *grace* before and after meat is not yet laid aſide.

Meantime the king, his ſon, and Helen, went
Where the rich wardrobe breath'd a coſtly ſcent.
The king ſelected from the glitt'ring rows
A bowl; the prince a ſilver beaker choſe.
The beauteous queen revolv'd with careful eyes
Her various textures of unnumber'd dyes,
And choſe the largeſt; with no vulgar art
Her own fair hands embroider'd ev'ry part:
Beneath the reſt it lay divinely bright,
Like radiant Heſper o'er the gems of night.
Then with each gift they haſten'd to their gueſt,
And thus the king Ulyſſes' heir addreſt.
Since fix'd are thy reſolves, may thund'ring Jove
With happieſt omens thy deſires approve!

v. 123. *Like radiant Heſper o'er the gems of night.*] If this paſſage were tranſlated literally, it would ſtand thus, *Helen choſe a veſture of moſt beautiful embroidery, and of the largeſt extent, a veſture that lay beneath the reſt.* We are to underſtand by the laſt circumſtance, that this veſture was the choiceſt of her wardrobe, it being repoſited with the greateſt care, or κάλλιον ἄλλων. The verſes are taken from lib. vi. of the Iliad. This robe was the work of Helen's own hands: an inſtance that in thoſe days a great lady, or a great beauty, might be a good workwoman: and ſhe here ſeems to take particular care to obviate an opinion one might otherwiſe have, that ſhe did not apply herſelf to thoſe works till her beſt days were paſt. We are told in the Iliad,

Her in the palace, at her loom ſhe found,
The golden web her own ſad ſtory crown'd:
The Trojan wars ſhe weav'd, herſelf the prize,
And, the dire triumphs of her fatal eyes.

This ſilver bowl, whoſe coſtly margins ſhine
Enchas'd with gold, this valu'd gift be thine;
To me this preſent, of Vulcanian frame,
From Sidon's hoſpitable monarch came;
To thee we now conſign the precious load,
The pride of kings, and labour of a God.
Then gave the cup; while Megapenthe brought
The ſilver vaſe with living ſculpture wrought.
The beauteous queen advancing next, diſplay'd
The ſhining veil, and thus endearing ſaid.
Accept, dear youth, this monument of love,
Long ſince, in better days, by Helen wove:
Safe in thy mother's care the veſture lay,
To deck thy bride and grace thy nuptial day.
Meantime may'ſt thou with happieſt ſpeed regain
Thy ſtately palace, and thy wide domain.
She ſaid, and gave the veil; with grateful look
The prince the variegated preſent took.
And now, when thro' the royal dome they paſs'd,
High on a throne the king each ſtranger plac'd.
A golden ew'r th' attendant damſel brings,
Replete with water from the cryſtal ſprings;
With copious ſtreams the ſhining vaſe ſupplies
A ſilver laver of capacious ſize.
They waſh. The tables in fair order ſpread,
The glitt'ring caniſters are crown'd with bread;
Viands of various kinds allure the taſte
Of choiceſt ſort and ſavour; rich repaſt!

Whilſt Eteoneus portions out the ſhares,
Atrides' ſon the purple draught prepares.
And now (each fated with the genial feaſt,
And the ſhort rage of thirſt and hunger ceaſt)
Ulyſſes' ſon, with his illuſtrious friend,
The horſes join, the poliſh'd car aſcend.
Along the court the fiery ſteeds rebound,
And the wide portal echoes to the ſound.
The king precedes; a bowl with fragrant wine
(Libation deſtin'd to the Pow'rs divine)
His right-hand held: before the ſteeds he ſtands,
Then, mix'd with pray'rs, he utters theſe commands.

Farewell and proſper, youths! let Neſtor know
What grateful thoughts ſtill in this boſom glow,
For all the proofs of his paternal care,
Thro' the long dangers of the ten years war.
Ah! doubt not our report (the prince rejoin'd)
Of all the virtues of thy generous mind.
And oh! return'd might we Ulyſſes meet!
To him thy preſents ſhew, thy words repeat:

v. 174. *And oh! return'd might we Ulyſſes meet!* &c.] It is not impoſſible but a falſe reading may have crept into the text in this verſe. In the preſent edition it ſtands thus.

— — — αἴ γὰρ ἐγὼν ὡς
Νοστήσας, Ἰθάκην δε κιὼν Ὀδυσῆϊ ἐνὶ οἴκῳ
Εἴποιμ'. ———

The ſenſe will be leſs intricate, and the conſtruction more eaſy, if inſtead of κίων we inſert κίχων, and read the line thus pointed.

How will each ſpeech his grateful wonder raiſe?
How will each gift indulge us in thy praiſe?
Scarce ended thus the prince, when on the right
Advanc'd the bird of Jove: auſpicious ſight!
A milk-white fowl his clinching talons bore,
With care domeſtick pamper'd at the floor.
Peaſants in vain with threat'ning cries purſue,
In ſolemn ſpeed the bird majeſtick flew
Full dexter to the car: the proſp'rous ſight
Fill'd evry breaſt with wonder and delight.
But Neſtor's ſon the chearful ſilence broke,
And in theſe words the Spartan chief beſpoke.
Say if to us the Gods theſe omens ſend,
Or fates peculiar to thyſelf portend?
Whilſt yet the monarch paus'd, with doubts oppreſt,
The beauteous queen reliev'd his lab'ring breaſt.
Hear me, ſhe cry'd, to whom the Gods have giv'n
To read this ſign, and myſtick ſenſe of Heav'n.

Νοϛήσας Ἰθάχην δε, κιχὼν Ὀδυσῆ ἐνὶ οἴκῳ
Εἴποιμ'.

Then the verſe will have this import, "O may I, upon "my return to Ithaca, finding Ulyſſes in his palace, give "him an account of their friendſhip!" whereas in the common editions there is a tautology, and either κίων or νοϛήσας muſt be allowed to be a ſuperfluity.

v. 192. *Hear me, ſhe cry'd,* &c.] It is not clear why the poet aſcribes a greater quickneſs and penetration to Helen in the ſolution of this prodigy, than to Menelaus.

As thus the plumy ſov'reign of the air
Left on the mountain's brow his callow care, 195

Is it, as Euſtathius aſſerts, from a ſuperiour acuteneſs of nature and preſence of mind in the fair ſex? Or is it, that Helen in this reſembles ſome modern beauties, who (though their huſbands be aſked the queſtion) will make the anſwer themſelves! I would willingly believe that Helen might happen to ſtand in ſuch a poſition, as to be able to make more minute obſervation upon the flight of the eagle, than Menelaus; and being more circumſtantial in the obſervation, ſhe might for that reaſon be more ready and circumſtantial in the interpretation. But Homer himſelf tells us, that ſhe received it from the Gods. This is a pious leſſon, to teach us in general, that all knowledge is the gift of God, and perhaps here particularly inſerted to raiſe the character of Helen, and make us leſs ſurpriſed to ſee her forgiven by Menelaus, when ſhe is not only pardoned, but favoured thus with inſpiration. And indeed it was neceſſary to reconcile us to this fatal beauty; at whom the reader is naturally enough offended: ſhe is an actreſs in many of the ſcenes of the Odyſſey, and conſequently to be redeemed from contempt: this is done by degrees; the poet ſteals away the adultreſs from our view, to ſet before us the amiable penitent.

v. 194. *As thus the plumy ſov'reign*, &c.] Ulyſſes is the eagle, the bird repreſents the ſuitors: the cries of the men and women when the eagle ſeized his prey, denote the lamentations of the relations of the ſuitors, who are ſlain by Ulyſſes. The circumſtance of the flight of the eagle, cloſe to the horſes, is added to ſhew that the prodigy had a fixed and certain reference to a perſon preſent; namely Telemachus: the eagle comes ſuddenly from a mountain: this means that Ulyſſes ſhall unexpectedly arrive from the country to the ſuitors deſtruction. The fowl is ſaid to be fed by the family, this is a full deſignation of

And wander'd thro' the wide æthereal way
To pour his wrath on yon' luxurious prey;
So ſhall thy god-like father, toſs'd in vain
Thro' all the dangers of the boundleſs main,
Arrive, (or is perchance already come)
From ſlaughter'd gluttons to releaſe the dome.
Oh! if this promis'd bliſs by thund'ring Jove,
(The prince reply'd) ſtand fix'd in fate above;
To thee, as to ſome God, I'll temples raiſe,
And crown thy altars with the coſtly blaze.
He ſaid; and bending o'er his chariot, ſlung
Athwart the fiery ſteeds the ſmarting thong;
The bounding ſhafts upon the harneſs play,
'Till night deſcending intercepts the way.
To Diocleus, at Pheræ, they repair,
Whoſe boaſted ſire was ſacred Alpheus' heir;
With him all night the youthful ſtrangers ſtay'd,
Nor found the hoſpitable rites unpay'd.
But ſoon as morning from her orient bed
Had ting'd the mountains with her earlieſt red,
They join'd the ſteeds, and on the chariot ſprung;
The brazen portals in their paſſage rung.
To Pylos ſoon they came; when thus begun
To Neſtor's heir Ulyſſes' god-like ſon:

the ſuitors, who feed upon Ulyſſes, and prey upon his family. And as this bird is killed by the talons of the eagle, ſo the ſuitors fall by the ſpear of Ulyſſes. *Euſtathius.*

Let not Piſiſtratus in vain be preſt,
Nor unconſenting hear his friend's requeſt;
His friend by long hereditary claim,
In toils his equal, and in years the ſame.
No farther from our veſſel, I implore,
The courſers drive; but laſh them to the ſhore.
Too long thy father would his friend detain;
I dread his proffer'd kindneſs urg'd in vain.

v. 226. *Too long thy father would his friend detain.*] This has been objected againſt, as contrary to the promiſe of Telemachus, who aſſured Menelaus that he would *acquaint Neſtor with his great friendſhip and hoſpitality*: is he therefore not guilty of falſhood, by embarking immediately without fulfilling his promiſe? Euſtathius anſwers, that the prodigy of the eagle occaſions this alteration, and that the not fulfilling his promiſe is to be aſcribed to accident and neceſſity. But the words of Telemachus ſufficiently juſtify his veracity; they are of the plural number καταλέξομεν. *I and Piſiſtratus will inform Neſtor of your hoſpitality*: this promiſe he leaves to be performed by Piſiſtratus, who returns directly to Neſtor. Others blame Telemachus as unpolite, in leaving Neſtor without any acknowledgement for his civilities. Dacier has recourſe to the command of Minerva, and to the prodigy of the eagle, for his vindication: he is commanded by the Gods to return immediately; and therefore not blameable for complying with their injunctions. But perhaps it is a better reaſon to ſay, that the nature of the poem requires ſuch a conduct: the action of the Odyſſey ſtands ſtill till the return of Telemachus, (whatever happens to him in Pyle being foreign to it) and therefore Homer ſhews his judgment, in precipitating the actions of Telemachus, rather than trifling away the time, while the ſtory ſleeps, only to ſhew a piece of complaiſance and ceremony.

The hero paus'd, and ponder'd this requeſt,
While love and duty warr'd within his breaſt.
At length reſolv'd, he turn'd his ready hand,
And laſh'd his panting courſers to the ſtrand.
There, while within the poop with care he ſtor'd
The regal preſents of the Spartan lord;
With ſpeed be gone, (ſaid he) call ev'ry mate,
E'er yet to Neſtor I the tale relate:
'Tis true, the fervour of his gen'rous heart
Brooks no repulſe, nor could'ſt thou ſoon depart;
Himſelf will ſeek thee here, nor wilt thou find,
In words alone, the Pylian monarch kind.
But when arriv'd, he thy return ſhall know,
How will his breaſt with honeſt fury glow?
This ſaid, the ſounding ſtrokes his horſes fire,
And ſoon he reach'd the palace of his ſire.

Now, (cry'd Telemachus) with ſpeedy care
Hoiſe ev'ry ſail, and ev'ry oar prepare.
Swift as the word his willing mates obey,
And ſeize their ſeats, impatient for the ſea.
Meantime the prince with ſacrifice adores
Minerva, and her guardian aid implores;
When lo! a wretch ran breathleſs to the ſhore,
New from his crime, and reeking yet with gore.
A ſeer he was, from great Melampus ſprung,
Melampus, who in Pylos flouriſh'd long,

v. 252. — — *From great Melampus ſprung.*] There is ſome obſcurity in this genealogical hiſtory. Melampus

'Till urg'd by wrongs a foreign realm he choſe,
Far from the hateful cauſe of all his woes.
Neleus his treaſures one long year detains;
As long, he groan'd in Phylacus's chains:
Meantime, what anguiſh and what rage, combin'd,
For lovely Pero rack'd his lab'ring mind!
Yet 'ſcap'd he death; and vengeful of his wrong
To Pylos drove the lowing herds along:
Then (Neleus vanquiſh'd, and conſign'd the Fair
To Bias' arms) he ſought a foreign air;
Argos the rich for his retreat he choſe,
There form'd his empire; there his palace roſe.

was a prophet, he lived in Pylos, and was a perſon of great wealth; his uncle Neleus ſeized his riches, and detained them a whole year, to oblige him to recover his herds detained by Iphyclus in Phylace; he failed in the attempt, and was kept in priſon by Iphyclus, the ſon of Phylacus. Bias, the brother of Melampus, was in love with Pero the daughter of Neleus; Neleus, to engage Melampus more ſtrongly in the enterprize, promiſes to give Pero in marriage to his brother Bias, upon the recovery of his herds from Iphyclus. At length Iphyclus releaſes Melampus from priſon, upon his diſcovering to him how he might have an heir to ſucceed to his dominions, and rewards him with reſtoring the herds of Neleus: then Neleus retracts his promiſe, and refuſes to give his daughter Pero to Bias the brother of Melampus; upon this Neleus and Melampus quarrel, and engaging in a ſingle combat, Neleus is vanquiſhed, and Melampus retires to Argos. See lib. xi. v. 350, &c. and the annotations, note 23.

From him Antiphates and Mantius came:
The firſt begot Oiclus great in fame,
And he Amphiaraus, immortal name!
The people's ſaviour, and divinely wiſe,
Belov'd by Jove, and him who gilds the ſkies,
Yet ſhort his date of life! by female pride he dies.

v. 270. *Belov'd by Jove, and him who gilds the ſkies,*
Yet ſhort his date of life! by female pride he dies.]

The poet means Eryphyle, who, being bribed with a golden bracelet by Polynices, perſuaded her huſband Amphiaraus to go to the Theban war, where he loſt his life. This is a remarkable paſſage: *Though he was loved by Jupiter and Apollo, yet he reached not to old age.* Is a ſhort life the greateſt inſtance of the love of the Gods? Plato quotes the verſe to this purpoſe. "The life of "man is ſo loaded with calamity, that it is an inſtance "of the favour of Heaven to take the burthen from us "with ſpeed." The ſame author in Axiochus (if that dialogue be his) aſſerts, that the Gods, having a perfect inſight into human affairs, take ſpeedily to themſelves thoſe whom they love. Thus when Trophonius and Agamedes, had built a temple to Apollo, they prayed to receive a bleſſing the moſt beneficial to mankind: the God granted their prayers, and they were both found dead the next morning. Thus likewiſe the prieſteſs of Juno, when her two ſons had yoked themſelves to her chariot, and drawn her for the greater expedition to the temple, prayed to the Goddeſs to reward their filial piety; and they both died that night. This agrees with the expreſſion of Menander, He whom the Gods love dies young.

Ὃν οἱ θεοὶ φιλῶσιν ἀποθνήσκει νέος.

From Mantius Clitus, whom Aurora's love
Snatch'd for his beauty to the thrones above:
And Polyphides on whom Phœbus ſhone
With fulleſt rays, Amphiaraus now gone;
In Hypereſia's groves he made abode,
And taught mankind the counſels of the God.
From him ſprung Theoclymenus, who found
(The ſacred wine yet foaming on the ground)

v. 272. ——— *Aurora's love*
Snatch'd for his beauty to the thrones above.]

There is nothing more common than ſuch accounts of men being carried away by Goddeſſes, in all the Greek poets; and yet what offends more againſt credibility? The poets invented theſe fables merely out of compliment to the dead. When any perſon happened to be drowned in a river; if a man, ſome Water Nymph ſtole him; if a woman, ſhe was ſeized to be the wife of the River God. If any were loſt at ſea, Neptune or ſome of the Sea Gods or Goddeſſes had taken them to their beds. But to ſpeak to the preſent purpoſe; if any perſon died in the fields, and his body happened not to be found, if he was murdered and buried, or devoured by wild beaſts, ſo that no account was heard of his death, he was immediately imagined to be taken from the earth by ſome Deity who was in love with his beauty. Thus Clitus being loſt in his morning ſports, like Orion while he was hunting, he was fabled to be carried to heaven by Aurora; being loſt at the time of the morning over which that Deity preſides.

v. 278. *From him ſprung Theoclymenus*—] We have had a long genealogical digreſſion to introduce Theoclymenus: I fear the whole paſſage will prove diſtaſteful to an Engliſh palate, it not being capable of any ornaments of

Telemachus: whom, as to Heav'n he preſt
His ardent vows, the ſtranger thus addreſt.

O thou! that doſt thy happy courſe prepare
With pure libations, and with ſolemn pray'r;
By that dread Pow'r to whom thy vows are paid;
By all the lives of theſe; thy own dear head,
Declare ſincerely to no foe's demand
Thy name, thy lineage, and paternal land.

poetry. I could wiſh Homer had omitted or ſhortened ſuch paſſages, though they might be uſeful in his age; for by ſuch honourable inſertions he made his court to the beſt families then in Greece. It is true the ſtory is told conciſely, and this occaſions ſome obſcurity; diſtance of time as well as place, makes us ſee all objects ſomewhat confuſedly and indiſtinctly. In the days of Homer theſe ſtories were univerſally known, and conſequently wanted no explication; the obſcurity therefore is not to be charged upon Homer, but to time, which has defaced and worn away ſome parts of the impreſſion, and made the image leſs diſcernible.

The uſe the poet makes of the adventure of Theoclymenus, is to give encouragement to Telemachus: he aſſiſts him with his advice, and by his gift of prophecy explains to him a prodigy in the concluſion of this book. By this method he connects it with the main action, in giving Telemachus aſſurances that his affairs haſten to a re-eſtabliſhment. Beſides theſe ſhort relations are valuable, as they convey to poſterity brief hiſtories of ancient facts and families that are extant no where elſe.

v. 287. *Declare — thy name, and lineage*, &c.] Theſe queſtions may be thought ſomewhat extraordinary; for what apparent reaſon is there for this fugitive to be told

Prepare then, ſaid Telemachus, to know
A tale from falſhood free, not free from woe.
From Ithaca, of royal birth, I came,
And great Ulyſſes (ever honour'd name!)
Was once my ſire: tho' now for ever loſt
In Stygian gloom he glides a penſive ghoſt!

the name of the parents of Telemachus? But the interrogations are very material; he makes them to learn if Telemachus or his father are friends to the perſon ſlain by his hand? if they were, inſtead of ſailing with him, he would have reaſon to fly from him, as from a perſon who might take away his life by the laws of the country. Thus in the Hebrew law, Numb. xxxv. 19. *The revenger of blood*, (ὁ ἀγχιστεύων, or *propinquus*) *ſhall ſlay the murderer when he meeteth him.* But the Jews had cities of refuge, to which the murderers fled as to a ſanctuary: the Greeks in like manner, if the homicide fled into a voluntary exile, permitted him to be in ſecurity till the murder was atoned, either by fulfilling a certain time of baniſhment, or by a pecuniary mulct or expiation.

I will only further remark the conciſeneſs of theſe interrogations of Theoclymenus: he aſks four queſtions in a breath, in the compaſs of one line; his apprehenſions of being purſued give him no leiſure to expatiate. Homer judiciouſly adapts his poetry to the circumſtances of the murderer, a man in fear being in great haſte to be in ſecurity. Telemachus anſwers with equal brevity, being under a neceſſity to finiſh his voyage in the night to avoid the ambuſh of the ſuitors. For this reaſon Homer ſhortens the relation, and complies with the exigency of Telemachus: with this further view, to unite the ſubordinate ſtory of Telemachus with that of Ulyſſes, it being neceſſary to haſten to the chief action, and without delay carry on the main deſign of the Odyſſey in the re-eſtabliſhment of Ulyſſes.

Whoſe fate enquiring thro' the world we rove;
The laſt, the wretched proof of filial love.
The ſtranger then. Nor ſhall I aught conceal,
But the dire ſecret of my fate reveal.
Of my own tribe an Argive wretch I ſlew;
Whoſe pow'rful friends the luckleſs deed purſue
With unrelenting rage and force from home
The blood-ſtain'd exile, ever doom'd to roam.
But bear, oh bear me o'er yon' azure flood;
Receive the ſuppliant! ſpare my deſtin'd blood!
Stranger (reply'd the prince) ſecurely reſt
Affianc'd in our faith; henceforth our gueſt.
Thus affable, Ulyſſes' god-like heir
Takes from the ſtranger's hand the glitt'ring ſpear:
He climbs the ſhip, aſcends the ſtern with haſte,
And by his ſide the gueſt accepted plac'd.
The chief his orders gives: th' obedient band
With due obſervance wait the chief's command;
With ſpeed the maſt they rear, with ſpeed unbind
The ſpacious ſheet, and ſtretch it to the wind.
Minerva calls; the ready gales obey
With rapid ſpeed to whirl them o'er the ſea.
Crunus they paſs'd, next Chalcis roll'd away,
When thick'ning darkneſs clos'd the doubtful day;

v. 316. *Crunus they paſs'd, next Chalcis* — &c.] This whole paſſage has been greatly corrupted; one line is omitted in all our editions of Homer, and the verſes themſelves are printed erroneouſly: for thus they ſtand, lib. viii. p. 539. of Strabo's Geography.

The ſilver Phæa's glitt'ring rills they loſt,
And ſkimm'd along by Elis' ſacred coaſt.

Βᾶν δὲ παρὰ Κρούνες, ϗ Χαλκίδα καλλιρέεθρον,
Δύσσετό τ' ἠέλιος, σκιόωντο τε πᾶσαι ἀγυιαί,
Ἡ δὲ Φειὰς ἐπέβαλλεν ἀγαλλομένη διὸς ὦκα.

The firſt line is added from Strabo: thus in Latin,

"Præterierunt Crunos, & Chalcida fluentis amœnam."

He writes ἀγαλλόμενη for ἐπειγομένη: and Φειὰς inſtead of Φερὰς. The courſe that Telemachus ſteered is thus explained by the ſame author: he firſt ſailed northwardly as far as Elis, then he turned towards the eaſt, avoiding the direct courſe to Ithaca, to eſcape the ambuſh of the ſuitors, who lay between Samos and Ithaca. Then he paſſed the Echinades (called Θοαὶ, that is ὀξεῖαι, or *ſharp-pointed*, by Homer. See Strabo, lib. x. They are called Oxias by Pliny) lying near the gulf of Corinth, and the mouths of Achelous; thus leaving Ithaca on the eaſt, and paſſing it, he alters his courſe again, ſails northwardly between Ithaca and Acarnania, and lands on the coaſt oppoſite to the Cephallenian ocean, where the ſuitors formed their ambuſh. The places mentioned by Homer lie in this order, Cruni, Chalcis, and Phæa: and are all rivers of ſmall note, or rather brooks, as Strabo expreſſes it: ἀδόξων ποταμῶν ῥεύματα, μᾶλλον δὲ ὀχέτων,

It is highly probable that Phæa, and not Pheræ, is the true reading, for Pheræ lay in Meſſenia, and not in Elis, as Strabo writes, and was in the poſſeſſion of Agamemnon; for he mentions that city amongſt the ſeven which he promiſes Achilles, in the ninth book of the Iliad.

Sev'n ample cities ſhall confeſs thy ſway,
Thee Enope, and Pheræ thee obey.

If it had not been under his dominion, how could he transfer the right to Achilles? Beſides, it would be abſurd to join Pheræ directly with Chalcis, when the one was in

Then cautious thro' the rocky reaches wind,
And turning ſudden, ſhun the death deſign'd.
Meantime the king, Eumæus, and the reſt,
Sat in the cottage, at their rural feaſt:
The banquet paſt, and ſatiate ev'ry man,
To try his hoſt Ulyſſes thus began.
Yet one night more, my friends, indulge your gueſt;
The laſt I purpoſe in your walls to reſt:
To-morrow for myſelf I muſt provide,
And only aſk your counſel, and a guide:
Patient to roam the ſtreet, by hunger led,
And bleſs the friendly hand that gives me bread.
There in Ulyſſes' roof I may relate
Ulyſſes' wand'rings to his royal mate;
Or mingling with the ſuitors haughty train
Not undeſerving ſome ſupport obtain.
Hermes to me his various gifts imparts,
Patron of induſtry and manual arts:

Meſſenia, the other in Elis; this would make the courſe of Telemachus's navigation unintelligible, if Elis and Meſſenia were confounded in the relation, and uſed promiſcuouſly without order or regularity.

I will only add that Strabo in the xxth book of his Geography, inſtead of Καλλιχίτωνα, reads Καλλιστώνα, perhaps through a ſlip of his memory.

v. 336. *Hermes to me his various gifts imparts,*
Patron of induſtry and manual arts]

Mercury was the ſervant and miniſter of the Gods, and

Few can with me in dext'rous works contend,
The pyre to build, the ſtubborn oak to rend;
To turn the taſteful viand o'er the flame;
Or foam the goblet with a purple ſtream.
Such are the taſks of men of mean eſtate,
Whom fortune dooms to ſerve the rich and great,

Alas! (Eumæus with a ſigh rejoin'd)
How ſprung a thought ſo monſtrous in thy mind?
If on that god-leſs race thou would'ſt attend.
Fate owes thee ſure a miſerable end!

was feigned to be the patron of all perſons of the like ſtation upon earth; it was ſuppoſed to be by his favour that all ſervants and attendants were ſucceſsful in their ſeveral functions. In this view the connexion will be eaſy, "I "will go (ſays Ulyſſes) and offer my ſervice to the ſui-"ors, and by the favour of Mercury who gives ſucceſs to "perſons of my condition, ſhall proſper; for no man is "better able to execute the offices of attendance, than "myſelf." It may be objected, that theſe functions are unworthy of the character, and beneath the dignity of an hero; but Ulyſſes is obliged to act in his aſſumed, not real character; as a beggar, not as a king. Athenæus (lib. i. p. 18.) vindicates Ulyſſes in another manner, "Men (ſays "he) in former ages performed their own offices, and "gloried in their dexterity in ſuch employments. Thus "Homer deſcribes Ulyſſes as the moſt dextrous man "living, in ordering wood for the fire, and in the "arts of cookery." But it is no more derogation to him to put on the appearance of a beggar, than it was to Pallas to aſſume that of a ſwain, as ſhe frequently does throughout the Odyſſey.

Their wrongs and blaſphemies aſcend the ſky,
And pull deſcending vengeance from on high.
Not ſuch, my friend, the ſervants of their feaſt;
A blooming train in rich embroid'ry dreſt,
With earth's whole tribute the bright table bends,
And ſmiling round celeſtial youth attends.
Stay then: no eye aſkance beholds thee here;
Sweet is thy converſe to each ſocial ear;
Well pleas'd, and pleaſing, in our cottage reſt,
'Till good Telemachus accepts his gueſt
With genial gifts, and change of fair attires,
And ſafe conveys thee where thy ſoul deſires.
To him the man of woes. O gracious Jove!
Reward this ſtranger's hoſpitable love,
Who knows the ſon of ſorrow to relieve,
Chears the ſad heart, nor lets affliction grieve.
Of all the ills unhappy mortals know,
A life of wand'rings is the greateſt woe:
On all their weary ways wait care and pain,
And pine and penury, a meagre train.
To ſuch a man ſince harbour you afford,
Relate the farther fortunes of your lord;

v. 348. *Their wrongs and blaſphemies aſcend the ſky.*] The ſenſe of this paſſage appears to me very obvious; Dacier renders it, *whoſe violence and inſolence is ſo great that they regard not the Gods, and that they attack even the heavens.* I ſhould rather chuſe to underſtand the words in the more plain and eaſy conſtruction: Grotius is of this judgment, and thinks they bear the ſame import as theſe in Gen. xviii. 21. *I will go down and ſee if they have done according to the cry which is come unto heaven*: and indeed there is a great ſimilitude between the expreſſions.

What cares his mother's tender breaſt engage,
And fire, forſaken on the verge of age;
Beneath the ſun prolong they yet their breath,
Or range the houſe of darkneſs and of death?
To whom the ſwain. Attend what you enquire,
Laertes lives, the miſerable ſire,

v. 370. *What cares his mother's tender breaſt engage,*
And fire, forſaken on the verge of age.]

Theſe queſtions may ſeem to be needleſs, becauſe Ulyſſes had been fully acquainted with the ſtory of Laertes, and the death of his mother Anticlea, by the ſhade of Tireſias; but Ulyſſes perſonates a ſtranger, and to carry on that character, pretends to be unacquainted with all the affairs of his own family. I cannot affirm that ſuch frequent repetitions of the ſame circumſtances are beautiful in Homer: the retirement of Laertes has been frequently mentioned, and the death of Anticlea related in other parts of the Odyſſey; however neceſſary ſuch reiterated accounts may be, I much queſtion whether they will prove entertaining; Homer himſelf in this place ſeems to apprehend it; for Eumæus paſſes over the queſtions made by Ulyſſes with a very ſhort anſwer, and enlarges upon other circumſtances, relating to his family and affairs, to give, as Euſtathius obſerves, variety to his poetry. But this conduct is very judicious upon another account; it lets Ulyſſes into the knowledge of his condition, and by it he is able to take his meaſures with the greater certainty, in order to bring about his own re-eſtabliſhment. This is a demonſtration that the objection of Rapin is without foundation; he calls theſe interviews between Ulyſſes and Eumæus mere idle fables, invented ſolely for amuſement, and contributing nothing to the action of the Odyſſey; but the contrary is true, for Ulyſſes directs his courſe according to theſe informations.

Lives, but implores of ev'ry Pow'r to lay
The burden down, and wiſhes for the day.
Torn from his offspring in the eve of life,
Torn from th' embraces of his tender wife,
Sole, and all comfortleſs, he waſtes away
Old age, untimely poſting ere his day.
She too, ſad mother! for Ulyſſes loſt
Pin'd out her bloom, and vaniſh'd to a ghoſt.
(So dire a fate, ye righteous Gods! avert,
From ev'ry friendly, ev'ry feeling heart!)
While yet ſhe was, tho' clouded o'er with grief,
Her pleaſing converſe miniſter'd relief:
With Ctimene, her youngeſt daughter, bred,
One roof contain'd us, and one table fed.
But when the ſoftly-ſtealing pace of time
Crept on from childhood into youthful prime,
To Samos' iſle ſhe ſent the wedded fair;
Me to the fields, to tend the rural care;
Array'd in garments her own hands had wove,
Nor leſs the darling object of her love.
Her hapleſs death my brighter days o'ercaſt,
Yet Providence deſerts me not at leaſt;
My preſent labours food and drink procure,
And more, the pleaſure to relieve the poor.

v. 399. *And more, the pleaſure to relieve the poor.*] This verſe,

Τῶν ἐφαγόμτ', ἐπιόντι, καὶ αἰδοίοισιν ἔδωκα.

has been traduced into the utmoſt obſcenity; Euſtathius vindicates the expreſſion: it means, "I have ſuſtained

Small is the comfort from the queen to hear
Unwelcome news, or vex the royal ear;
Blank and diſcountenanc'd the ſervants ſtand,
Nor dare to queſtion where the proud command:
No profit ſprings beneath uſurping pow'rs;
Want feeds not there, where luxury devours,
Nor harbours charity where riot reigns:
Proud are the lords, and wretched are the ſwains.
The ſuff'ring chief at this began to melt;
And, oh Eumæus! thou (he cries) haſt felt
The ſpite of fortune too! her cruel hand
Snatch'd thee an infant from thy native land!
Snatch'd from thy parents arms, thy parents eyes,
To early wants! a man of miſeries!
Thy whole ſad ſtory, from its firſt, declare:
Sunk the fair city by the rage of war,
Where once thy parents dwelt? or did they keep,
In humbler life, the lowing herds and ſheep?

" myſelf with meat and drink by an honeſt induſtry, and " have got wherewithal to relieve virtue that wants." He interprets αἰδοίοισιν, by ἀνδράσιν αἰδοῦς ἀξίοις, or, *men worthy of regard and honour*: ξήνοις δ' ἰκέταις. The following words,

— — οὐ μείλιχόν ἐϛιν ἀκοῦσαι
οὔτ' ἴπος, οὔτέ τι ἔργον —

are capable of a double conſtruction, and imply either that *I take no delight in hearing of Penelope, ſhe being in diſtreſs, and in the power of the ſuitors*; or that the ſuitors ſo beſiege the palace, that *it is impoſſible for me to hear one gentle word from Penelope, or receive one obliging action from her hand.* The preference is ſubmitted to the reader's judgment; they both contain images of tenderneſs and humanity.

So left perhaps to tend the fleecy train,
Rude pirates ſeiz'd, and ſhipp'd thee o'er the main?
Doom'd a fair prize to grace ſome prince's board,
The worthy purchaſe of a foreign lord.
If then my fortunes can delight my friend,
A ſtory fruitful of events attend:
Another's ſorrow may thy ear enjoy,
And wine the lengthen'd intervals employ.
Long nights the now declining year beſtows;
A part we conſecrate to ſoft repoſe,
A part in pleaſing talk we entertain;
For too much reſt itſelf becomes a pain.
Let thoſe, whom ſleep invites, the call obey,
Their cares reſuming with the dawning day:
Here let us feaſt, and to the feaſt be join'd
Diſcourſe, the ſweeter banquet of the mind;
Review the ſeries of our lives, and taſte
The melancholy joy of evils paſt:

v. 426. *Long nights the now declining year beſtows*, &c.] From hence we may conclude, that the return of Ulyſſes was probably in the decline of the year, in the latter part of the autumn, and not in the ſummer; the nights then being ſhort cannot be called Νύκτες ἀθήσφατοι. *Euſtathius.*

v. 429. ——— *Too much reſt itſelf becomes a pain.*] This aphoriſm is agreeable to nature and experience; the ſame thing is aſſerted by Hippocrates, *Sleep or watchfulneſs, when exceſſive, become diſeaſes*; too much ſleep occaſions an exceſs of perſpiration, and conſequently weakens and diſſipates the animal ſpirits. *Dacier.*

v. 434. ——————— *and taſte*
The melancholy joy of evils paſt.]

For he who much has ſuffer'd, much will know;
And pleas'd remembrance builds delight on woe.
Above Ortygia lies an iſle of fame,
Far hence remote, and Syria is the name;
(There curious eyes inſcrib'd with wonder trace
The ſun's diurnal, and his annual race)

There is undoubtedly a great pleaſure in the remembrance of paſt ſufferings: nay calamity has this advantage over proſperity; an evil when paſt turns into a comfort; but a paſt pleaſure though innocent, leaves in its room an anxiety for the want of it, and if it be a guilty pleaſure, a remorſe. The reaſon (obſerves Euſtathius) why paſt evils delight, is from the conſciouſneſs of the praiſe due to our prudence, and patience under them, from the ſenſe of our felicity in being delivered from them, and from gratitude to divine Providence, which has delivered us. It is the joy of good men to believe themſelves the favourites of Heaven.

v. 438. *Ortygia.*] This is an ancient name of Delos, ſo called from ὄρτυξ, a *quail*, from the great numbers of thoſe birds found upon that iſland. Lycophron, in his obſcure way of writing, calls it ὄρτυξ πλεκτμίνη or the *winged quail*; perhaps from the fable of Aſteria being turned into that bird in her flight from Jupiter, and giving name to the iſland from the transformation ſhe ſuffered upon it. It is one of the Cyclades, and lies in the Ægean ocean. Syria, or Syros, is another ſmall iſland lying eaſtward of Ithaca, according to true geography.

v. 440. *There curious eyes inſcrib'd with wonder trace*
The ſun's diurnal, and his annual race.]

The words in Homer are τροπαὶ ἠελίοιο, or *ſolis converſiones*. Monſieur Perault inſults the poet as ignorant of geography, for placing Syros under the *tropick*; an errour (ſays

Not large, but fruitful; ſtor'd with graſs to keep
The bellowing oxen, and the bleating ſheep;

he) which commentators in vain have laboured to defend, by having recourſe to a ſun-dial of Pherecydes on which the motions of the ſun (the τροπαὶ ἠελίοιο) were deſigned. The laſt defence would indeed be ridiculous, ſince Pherecydes flouriſhed three hundred years after the time of Homer: no one (replies Monſieur Boileau) was ever at any difficulty about the ſenſe of this paſſage; Euſtathius proves that τρέπεσθαι ſignifies the ſame as δύνειν, and denotes the ſetting of the ſun; ſo that the words mean, that Syros is ſituate above Ortygia, on that ſide where the ſun ſets, or weſterly, πρὸς τὰ δυτικὰ μέρη τῆς Ὀρτυγίας. It is true, Euſtathius mentions a bower, σκήλαιον, in which the converſions of the ſun were figured. This indeed would fully vindicate Homer: but Bochart and others affirm, that Euſtathius is in an errour, and that Syros is ſo far from lying to the weſt, πρὸς τροπὰς ἠελίοιο, that it bears an eaſtern poſition both with reſpect to Ithaca and Delos: how is this objection to be anſwered? Bochart, p. 411. of his *Geographia ſacra*, explains it by having recourſe to the bower mentioned by Euſtathius, in which the motions of the ſun were drawn. Pherecydes (ſays Heſychius Mileſius) having collected the writings of the Phœnicians, from the uſe of them alone without any inſtructor, became famous in the world by the ſtrength of his own genius: and Laertius writes, that an heliotrope made by him was preſerved in the iſland of Syros. Thus it is evident, that he borrowed his knowledge from the Phœnicians, and probably his ſkill in aſtronomy, they being very expert in that ſcience, by reaſon of its uſe in their navigation. Why then might there not be a machine which exhibited the motions of the ſun, made by the Phœnicians, and why might not Homer be acquainted with it? It is probable that Pherecydes took his pattern from this heliotrope, which being one of the greateſt rarities of antiquity, might

Her ſloping hills the mantling vines adorn,
And her rich valleys wave with golden corn. 445

give a great reputation to Syros, and conſequently was worthy to be celebrated by Homer, the great preſerver of antiquities. *Fallitur igitur*, (ſays Bochart) *Euſtathius, cum vult intelligi, quaſi ſita ſit Syrus ad occiduas partes Deli; cum contra Deli ad ortum ſit Syrus, non ad occaſum; & rem ſic ſe habere ex ipſo Homero patet, apud quem Eumæus in Ithacâ, Syriam aſſerit eſſe trans Delum, quo nihil dici potuit falſius, ſi Syrus ſit ad occaſum Deli.* If this anſwer appears to any perſon too ſtudied and abſtruſe, the difficulty may be ſolved, by ſuppoſing Eumæus ſpeaking of Delos, as it lay with reſpect to Syrus, before he was carried from it; for inſtance, if Syrus lies on the eaſt of Delos to a man in Ithaca, both Ithaca and Delos will lie on the weſt of Syrus to one of that iſland; I would therefore imagine that Eumæus ſpeaks as a native of Syrus, and not as a ſojourner in Ithaca, and then Delos will lie towards the ſun-ſetting, or πρὸς ἠλίου τροπάς: but this laſt I only propoſe as a conjecture, not preſuming to offer it as a deciſion.

v. 442. *Not large, but fruitful; flor'd with graſs to keep*
The bellowing oxen, and the bleating ſheep.]

It is probable that Homer was well acquainted with the nature of this iſland, and that it really enjoyed an admirable temperature of air; and therefore was exceedingly healthful; the fertility of the ſoil proves the happineſs of the air, which would naturally free the inhabitants from the maladies ariſing from a leſs ſalubrious ſituation. It is for this reaſon that they are ſaid to be ſlain by Diana and Apollo. All deaths that were ſudden, and without ſickneſs, were aſcribed to thoſe Deities. Bochart (p. 410.) tells us, that the name of Syros was given to the iſland by the Phœnicians; Aſira, or Sira, ſignifying *rich*, in their language; or rather it was ſo called from Sura, or Aſura, ſignifying *happy*; either of theſe derivations fully denote

No want, no famine the glad natives know,
Nor ſink by ſickneſs to the ſhades below;
But when a length of years unnerves the ſtrong,
Apollo comes, and Cynthia comes along.
They bend the ſilver bow with tender ſkill,
And void of pain, the ſilent arrows kill.
Two equal tribes this fertile land divide,
Where two fair cities riſe with equal pride.
But both in conſtant peace one prince obey,
And Cteſius there, my father, holds the ſway.
Freighted, it ſeems, with toys of ev'ry ſort
A ſhip of Sidon anchor'd in our port;

the excellence both of the ſoil and air: and that this name is of Phœnician extract is probable from the words of Homer, who aſſures us that they ſtayed a whole year upon this iſland, and conſequently had opportunity to know the healthfulneſs and fertility of it.

v. 457. *A ſhip of Sidon* ——] Here is a full teſtimony, that the Phœnicians were remarkable for arts and navigation over all the old world. They were expulſed from their country by Joſhua, (as Bochart informs us) and then ſettling along the ſea-coaſts, they ſpread over all the Mediterranean, and by degrees ſent out colonies into Europe, Aſia, and Africk; that they were in Africk appears from Procopius, where he mentions a pillar, with a Phœnician inſcription. Ἡμεῖς ἐσμὲν οἱ φύγοντες ἀπὸ προσώπου Ἰήσου τοῦ λῃστοῦ υἱοῦ Νάυη; that is, *We are a people that fly from Joſhua the ſon of Nun, the robber*; they gave him that title out of reſentment for their diſpoſſeſſion. The character they bear in the Scriptures agrees with this in Homer. Iſaiah xxiii. 2. *The merchants of Sidon, that paſs over the ſeas*; and it likewiſe appears from the Scriptures, that they excelled in all arts of embroidery, and works of curioſity.

What-time it chanc'd the palace entertain'd,
Skill'd in rich works, a woman of their land:
This nymph, where anchor'd the Phœnician train
To waſh her robes deſcending to the main,
A ſmooth-tongu'd ſailor won her to his mind;
(For love deceives the beſt of woman-kind.)
A ſudden truſt from ſudden liking grew;
She told her name, her race, and all ſhe knew.
I too (ſhe cry'd) from glorious Sidon came,
My father Arybas, of wealthy fame;

v. 458. *What-time it chanc'd the palace entertain'd,*
Skill'd in rich works, a woman of their land.]

I was ſurpriſed to find that Euſtathius miſtook this Phœnician woman for the mother of Eumæus; ſhe herſelf tells us, that ſhe was only his governeſs.

Παῖδα γὰρ ἀνδρὸς ἐὼν ἐνὶ μεγάροις ἀπιτάλλω.

It is not probable that Eumæus would have painted his own mother in the dreſs of an adultereſs, and an abandoned traitreſs: nay, he directly diſtinguiſhes his mother from this Phœnician in the ſequel of the ſtory (where he calls her πότνια μήτης, or his *venerable mother*) and when he ſpeaks of the Phœnician, he conſtantly calls her γυνὴ, not μήτης. Nor indeed could he have called her πότνια at all, if ſhe had been a perſon of ſuch a deteſtable character. Spondanus adopts the miſtake of Euſtathius, and endeavours to vindicate her from the *manner* of her frailty. *Modeſte decepta donis, &c. ut eorum libidini obſecundaret,* "it "was a modeſt adultery, ſhe being deceived by bribes to "yield to their ſolicitation." However erroneous this opinion is, yet it ſhews Spondanus to be a kind and complaiſant caſuiſt.

But ſnatch'd by pirates from my native place,
The Taphians ſold me to this man's embrace.
Haſte then (the falſe deſigning youth reply'd)
Haſte to thy country; love ſhall be thy guide;
Haſte to thy father's houſe, thy father's breaſt,
For ſtill he lives, and lives with riches bleſt.
"Swear firſt (ſhe cry'd) ye ſailors! to reſtore
"A wretch in ſafety to her native ſhore."
Swift as ſhe aſk'd, the ready ſailors ſwore.
She then proceeds: Now let our compact made
Be nor by ſignal nor by word betray'd,
Nor near me any of your crew deſcry'd
By road frequented, or by fountain ſide.
Be ſilence ſtill our guard. The monarch's ſpies
(For watchful age is ready to ſurmiſe)
Are ſtill at hand; and this, reveal'd, muſt be
Death to yourſelves, eternal chains to me.
Your veſſel loaded, and your traffick paſt,
Diſpatch a weary meſſenger with haſte:
Then gold and coſtly treaſures will I bring,
And more, the infant-offspring of the king.
Him, child-like wand'ring forth, I'll lead away,
(A noble prize!) and to your ſhip convey.
Thus ſpoke the dame, and homeward took the road.
A year they traffick, and their veſſel load,
Their ſtores compleat, and ready now to weigh,
A ſpy was ſent their ſummons to convey:

An artiſt to my father's palace came,
With gold and amber chains, elab'rate frame:
Each female eye the glitt'ring links employ,
They turn, review, and cheapen ev'ry toy.
He took th' occaſion as they ſtood intent,
Gave her the ſign, and to his veſſel went.
She ſtraight purſu'd, and ſeiz'd my willing arm;
I follow'd ſmiling, innocent of harm.
Three golden goblets in the porch ſhe found,
(The gueſts not enter'd, but the table crown'd)
Hid in her fraudful boſom, theſe ſhe bore:
Now ſet the ſun, and darken'd all the ſhore.
Arriving then, where tilting on the tides
Prepar'd to lanch the freighted veſſel rides;
Aboard they heave us, mount their decks, and ſweep
With level oar along the glaſſy deep.

v. 502. *I followed ſmiling, innocent of harm.*] There is a little incredibility in this narration; for if Eumæus was ſuch an infant as he is deſcribed to be at the time when he was betrayed by his Phœnician governeſs, what probability is there that he ſhould be able to retain all theſe particulars ſo circumſtantially? He was not of an age capable of making, or remembering ſo many obſervations. The anſwer is, that he afterwards learned them from Laertes, who bought him of the Phœnicians: and no doubt they told him the quality of Eumæus, to enhance the price and make the better bargain. It is alſo natural to imagine, that Eumæus, when he grew up to manhood, would be inquiſitive after his own birth and fortunes, and therefore might probably learn theſe particulars from Laertes. *Euſtathius.*

Six calmy days and ſix ſmooth nights we ſail,
And conſtant Jove ſupply'd the gentle gale.
The ſeventh, the fraudful wretch, (no cauſe deſcry'd)
Touch'd by Diana's vengeful arrow dy'd.
Down dropt the caitiff-corſe, a worthleſs load,
Down to the deep; there roll'd, the future food
Of fierce ſea-wolves, and monſters of the flood.
An helpleſs infant, I remain'd behind;
Thence borne to Ithaca by wave and wind;
Sold to Laertes, by divine command,
And now adopted to a foreign land.

v. 511. *Six calmy days*, &c.] It is evident from this paſſage, that it is above ſix days ſail from Ithaca to Syros, though carried with favourable winds. *Dacier.*

v. 514. —— *Diana's vengeful arrow* ——] I would juſt obſerve the poetical juſtice of Homer, in the puniſhment of this Phœnician. Misfortune generally purſues wickedneſs, and though we eſcape the vengeance of man, yet Heaven frequently overtakes us when we think we are in ſecurity, and death calls us from our impious acquiſitions.

v. 521. *And now adopted to a foreign land.*] Homer has here given us an hiſtory of the life of Eumæus; the epiſode contains near an hundred lines, and may ſeem entirely foreign to the action of the Odyſſey. I will not affirm that it is in every reſpect to be juſtified. The main ſtory is at a ſtand; but we are to conſider that this relation takes up but ſmall part of one leiſure evening, and that the action cannot proceed till the return of Telemachus. It is of uſe to ſet off the character of Eumæus, and ſhew him

To him the king. Reciting thus thy cares,
My ſecret ſoul in all thy ſorrows ſhares:
But one choice bleſſing (ſuch is Jove's high will)
Has ſweeten'd all thy bitter draught of ill:
Torn from thy country to no hapleſs end,
The Gods have, in a maſter, giv'n a friend.
Whatever frugal nature needs is thine,
(For ſhe needs little) daily bread and wine.
While I, ſo many wand'rings paſt and woes,
Live but on what thy poverty beſtows.
So paſt in pleaſing dialogue away
The night; then down to ſhort repoſe they lay;
'Till radiant roſe the meſſenger of day.
While in the port of Ithaca, the band
Of young Telemachus approach'd the land;

to be a perſon of quality, worthy to be an agent in an epick poem, where every character ought to be remote from meanneſs: ſo the ſtory has a diſtant relation to the Odyſſey, and perhaps is not to be looked upon merely as an excreſcence from the main building, but a ſmall projection to adorn it.

v. 534. *'Till radiant roſe the meſſenger of day.*] This is the morning of the thirty-eighth day ſince the beginning of the Odyſſey. It is obſervable that Telemachus takes more time in his return from Pylos, than in ſailing thither from his own country; for in the latter end of the ſecond book he ſets ſail after ſun-ſetting, and reached Pyle in the morning: here he embarks in the afternoon, and yet arrives not at Ithaca till after break of day. The reaſon of it is not to be aſcribed to a leſs proſperous wind, but to the greater compaſs he was obliged to fetch, to eſcape the

Their ſails they loos'd, they laſh'd the maſt aſide,
And caſt their anchors, and the cables ty'd:
Then on the breezy ſhore deſcending join
In grateful banquet o'er the roſy wine.
When thus the prince: Now each his courſe purſue;
I to the fields, and to the city you.
Long abſent hence, I dedicate this day
My ſwains to viſit, and the works ſurvey.
Expect me with the morn, to pay the ſkies
Our debt of ſafe return, in feaſt and ſacrifice.
Then Theoclymenus. But who ſhall lend,
Meantime, protection to thy ſtranger-friend?
Straight to the queen and palace ſhall I fly,
Or yet more diſtant, to ſome lord apply?
The prince return'd. Renown'd in days of yore
Has ſtood our father's hoſpitable door;
No other roof a ſtranger ſhou'd receive,
Nor other hands than ours the welcome give.
But in my abſence riot fills the place,
Nor bears the modeſt queen a ſtranger's face,
From noiſeful revel far remote ſhe flies,
But rarely ſeen, or ſeen with weeping eyes.
No —— let Eurymachus receive my gueſt,
Of nature courteous, and by far the beſt;

ambuſh of the ſuitors. In the former voyage he ſteered a direct courſe; in this he ſails round about to the north of Ithaca, and therefore waſtes more time in his voyage to it.

He wooes the queen with more reſpectful flame,
And emulates her former huſband's fame:
With what ſucceſs, 'tis Jove's alone to know,
And the hop'd nuptials turn to joy or woe.

Thus ſpeaking, on the right up-ſoar'd in air
The hawk, Apollo's ſwift-wing'd meſſenger; 566

v. 561. *He wooes the queen with more reſpectful flame,*
And emulates her former huſband's fame.]

The words in the original are ἐδυσσῆϊ γέρας ἔξειν, which may either be rendered, *to obtain the honour of marrying Penelope*, agreeably to the former part of the verſe; or it means that Eurymachus has the faireſt hopes to marry Penelope, and *obtain the throne* or γέρας of Ulyſſes. Hobbs tranſlates the verſe almoſt obſcenely in the former ſenſe:

— — — He beſt loves my mother;
And what my father did, would do the ſame.

The former in my judgment is the better conſtruction, eſpecially becauſe it avoids a tautology, and gives a new image in the ſecond part of the verſe, very different from the ſenſe expreſſed in the former part of it. But of all the meanings it is capable of I ſhould prefer this; "That "he courts her upon the moſt honourable principles, and "ſeems deſirous to have the honour of Ulyſſes, by imitat-"ing his worth:" and this is agreeable to the character of Eurymachus, which diſtinguiſhes him from all the other ſuitors.

v. 566. *The hawk, Apollo's ſwift-wing'd meſſenger.*] The augury is thus to be interpreted; Ulyſſes is the hawk, the ſuitors the pigeon; the hawk denotes the valour of Ulyſſes, being a bird of prey; the pigeon repreſents the cowardice of the ſuitors, that bird being remarkable for her timorous

His deathful pounces tore a trembling dove;
The clotted feathers, ſcatter'd from above,
Between the hero and the veſſel pour
Thick plumage, mingled with a ſanguine ſhow'r.

Th' obſerving augur took the prince aſide,
Seiz'd by the hand, and thus prophetick cry'd.
Yon' bird that dexter cuts th' aerial road,
Roſe ominous, nor flies without a God:
No race but thine ſhall Ithaca obey,
To thine, for ages, Heav'n decrees the ſway.
Succeed the omen, Gods! (the youth rejoin'd)
Soon ſhall my bounties ſpeak a grateful mind,

nature. The hawk flies on the right, to denote ſucceſs to Ulyſſes.

Homer calls this bird the meſſenger of Apollo; not that this augury was ſent by that Deity, (though that be no forced interpretation) but the expreſſion implies, that the hawk was ſacred to Apollo; as the peacock was to Juno, the owl to Pallas, and the eagle to Jupiter. Thus Ælian, anim. lib. x. c. 14. Αἰγύπτιοι τὸν ἱέρακα τῷ Ἀπόλλωνι τιμᾶν ἰοικάσιν &c. and he gives the reaſon of it, for the hawk is the only bird that is capable to bear the luſtre of the ſun without inconvenience and difficulty; the ſame is ſaid of the eagle, but this hawk is reckoned to be of the *aquiline* kind. It was death among the Ægyptians to kill this bird, becauſe it was dedicated to Apollo.

There is another reaſon why any bird that was taken notice of by way of augury, may be ſaid to be the meſſenger of Apollo, that Deity preſiding over divination.

v. 571. *Th' obſerving augur took the prince aſide.*] The reaſon why Theoclymenus withdraws Telemachus, while

And ſoon each envy'd happineſs attend
The man, who calls Telemachus his friend.
Then to Peiræus —— Thou whom time has prov'd
A faithful ſervant, by thy prince belov'd!
'Till we returning ſhall our gueſt demand,
Accept this charge with honour, at our hand.
To this Peiræus; Joyful I obey,
Well pleas'd the hoſpitable rites to pay.
The preſence of thy gueſt ſhall beſt reward
(If long thy ſtay) the abſence of my lord.

he interprets the augury, is not apparent at the firſt view, but he does it out of an apprehenſion leſt he ſhould be overheard by ſome of the company, who might diſcloſe the ſecret to the ſuitors, and ſuch a diſcovery might prove fatal to his own perſon, or to the fortunes of Telemachus. *Euſtathius.*

v. 581. *Then to Peiræus — Thou whom time has prov'd*, &c.] We find that Telemachus intended to deliver Theoclymenus to the care of Eurymachus: what then is the reaſon why he thus ſuddenly alters that reſolution, and intruſts him to Peiræus? This is occaſioned by the diſcovery of the ſkill of Theoclymenus in augury: he fears leſt the ſuitors ſhould extort ſome prediction from him that might be detrimental to his affairs, or ſhould he refuſe it, to the perſon of Theoclymenus. *Euſtathius.*

This book comprehends ſomewhat more than the ſpace of two days and one night; for the viſion appears to Telemachus a little before the dawn, in the night preceding the thirty-ſixth day, and he lands in Ithaca, on the thirty-eighth in the morning.

With that, their anchors he commands to weigh,
Mount the tall bark and lanch into the ſea.
All with obedient haſte forſake the ſhores,
And plac'd in order, ſpread their equal oars.
Then from the deck the prince his ſandals takes;
Pois'd in his hand the pointed jav'lin ſhakes.
They part; while leſs'ning from the hero's view,
Swift to the town the well-row'd galley flew:
The hero trod the margin of the main,
And reach'd the manſion of his faithful ſwain.

THE SIXTEENTH BOOK OF THE ODYSSEY.

THE
ARGUMENT.

The Diſcovery of Ulyſſes to Telemachus.

TELEMACHUS arriving at the lodge of Eumæus ſends him to carry Penelope the news of his return. Minerva appearing to Ulyſſes commands him to diſcover himſelf to his ſon. The Princes, who had lain in ambuſh to intercept Telemachus in his way, their project being defeated, return to Ithaca.

THE

SIXTEENTH BOOK

OF THE

ODYSSEY.

SOON as the morning bluſh'd along the plains,
Ulyſſes, and the monarch of the ſwains,
Awake the ſleeping fires, their meal prepare,
And forth to paſture ſend the briſtly care.

V. 1. *Soon as the morning bluſh'd along the plains*, &c.] This book opens with the greateſt ſimplicity imaginable. Dionyſius Halicarnaſſus quotes the ſixteen firſt lines to this purpoſe: the poet, ſays that author, deſcribes a low and vulgar action, yet gives it an inexpreſſible ſweetneſs; the ear is pleaſed with the harmony of the poetry, and yet there is nothing noble in the ſentiments. Whence, continues he, does this ariſe? from the choice of the words, or from the placing of them? No one will affirm that it conſiſts in the choice of the words, for the diction is entirely low and vulgar, ſo vulgar, that a common artificer or peaſant, who never ſtudied elocution, would uſe it in converſation; turn the verſes into proſe, and this will appear. There are no tranſpoſitions, no figures, no variety of dialect, nor any new and ſtudied expreſſions. Where then is the beauty of the poetry? It muſt be entirely aſcribed

The prince's near approach the dogs deſcry,
And fawning round his feet confeſs their joy.

to the harmonious juncture and poſition of the words; and he concludes that the *collocation* of words has a greater efficacy both in proſe and poetry, than the *choice*. And indeed a judicious diſpoſition of them (like what is feigned of Minerva in this book) makes a mean, deformed, and vulgar period, riſe, like Ulyſſes from beggary, into pomp and dignity. This may be exemplified from the rules of mechanick arts; an architect, when he gathers his materials for a building, has theſe three things chiefly in view: firſt, with what piece of ſtone, wood, &c. a correſpondent piece will beſt agree: next he conſiders their ſeveral formations, and how it will beſt ſtand in the ſtructure: and laſtly, if any part of the materials ſuits not with the allotted place, he rejects it or new ſhapes it, till it agrees with the whole work: the ſame care is to be taken by a good writer: he is firſt to conſider what noun or verb is to be joined to other nouns or verbs ſo fitly as not poſſibly to be placed more conveniently; for a promiſcuous connecting of words indiſcriminately ſpoils both proſe and poetry: next he conſiders the frame or turn of the verb or noun, and how it will ſtand in the place he allots it; and if it ſuits not exactly, he changes it, ſometimes by varying the numbers, ſometimes the caſes, and at other times the genders: and laſtly, if a word prove ſo ſtubborn as not to bend to the level of the period, he entirely rejects it, and introduces another that preſerves a due conformity; or at leaſt, if an inharmonious word be neceſſary, he places it ſo judiciouſly between more agreeable and tuneful words, that their harmony ſteals away our imagination from obſerving the roughneſs of the others: likewiſe generals, who in ordering the ranks of their ſoldiers, ſtrengthen the weaker files by ſuſtaining them with the ſtronger; and by this method

Their gentle blandiſhment the king ſurvey'd,
Heard his reſounding ſtep, and inſtant ſaid:

render the whole invincible. See likewiſe cap. xxxii. of Longinus, of the diſpoſition of words.

v. 3. —— *their meal prepare.*] The word in the original is ἄριστον, which here denotes very evidently the morning repaſt: it is uſed but in one other place in all Homer in this ſenſe: Iliad, lib. xxiv. v. 124.

Ἐσσυμένως δ' ἐπίνητο ἠὲ ἐνὶ νηῒ θοῇ ἄριστον.

But we are not therefore to imagine that this was an uſual meal; Homer in other places expreſſes it by δεῖπνον, as is obſerved by Athenæus, lib. i.

Οἳ δ' ἄρα δεῖπνον εἶλον· ἀπὸ δ' αὐτῶ θωρήσσοντο.

"At the dawn of the day they took repaſt and armed "themſelves for battle." The Greeks had three cuſtomary meals, which are diſtinctly mentioned by Palamedes in Æſchylus,

Ἄριστα, δεῖπνα, δέρτα θ' αἱρεῖσθαι τρίτα.

Homer, adds Athenæus, mentions a fourth repaſt, lib. xvii. of the Odyſſey:

—— σὺ δ' ἴσχεο δειλίσας.

This the Romans call *commeſſationem*, we a collation, a repaſt taken, as the ſame author explains it, between dinner and ſupper: the word is derived ἀπὸ τῆς δείλης ὥρας, or *the evening twilight*. But Athenæus refutes himſelf, lib. v. p. 193. I have already (ſays he) obſerved that the antients eat thrice a day, and it is ridiculous to imagine that they eat four times from theſe words of Homer:

—— σὺ δ' ἴσχεο δειλίσας.

Some well-known friend (Eumæus) bends this way;
His ſteps I hear; the dogs familiar play.
While yet he ſpoke, the prince advancing drew
Nigh to the lodge, and now appear'd in view.
Tranſported from his ſeat Eumæus ſprung,
Dropp'd the full bowl, and round his boſom hung;

For that expreſſion meant only that Eumæus ſhould return in the evening, δειλινὸν διατρίψας χρόνον. But this is not the full import of the word δειλιήσας, for it undoubtedly means, to take the evening repaſt or ſupper, as is evident from the concluſion of the ſeventeenth book of the Odyſſey: *Return*, ſays Telemachus to Eumæus, *but firſt take refreſhment*; and Eumæus accordingly eats, and the poet immediately adds, *becauſe the evening was come*, or ἐπήλυθε δείελον ἦμαρ. However, in no ſenſe can this word be brought to prove that the Greeks eat four times in the day: but if any perſon will imagine that it ſignifies in that place an immediate meal, all that can be gathered from it is, that Telemachus out of kindneſs to Eumæus commands him to eat before the uſual hour of repaſt, before he leaves his palace: but Heſychius rightly interprets it by τὸ δειλινὸν λάβαν ἔμβρεγμα, that is, *eating his ſupper*; for as δεῖπνον and ἄριστον ſignify the dinner, ſo δόρπον and δειλινὸν denote the time of ſupper promiſcuouſly.

I will add no more, but refer the reader for a full explication of δεῖπνον, ἄριστον and δειλινὸν, to lib. viii. Queſt. 6. of Plutarch's Sympoſiacks.

v. 14. *Dropp'd the full bowl*——] In the original it is, Eumæus dropped the bowl as he tempered it with water. It was cuſtomary not to drink wine unmixed with water among the ancients; there was no certain proportion obſerved in the mixture, ſome to one veſſel of wine poured in two of water, others to two of wine, five of wa-

Kiſſing his cheek, his hand, while from his eye
The tears rain'd copious in a ſhow'r of joy.
As ſome fond ſire who ten long winters grieves,
From foreign climes an only ſon receives,
(Child of his age) with ſtrong paternal joy
Forward he ſprings, and claſps the fav'rite boy:
So round the youth his arms Eumæus ſpread,
As if the grave had giv'n him from the dead.
And is it thou! my ever-dear delight!
O art thou come to bleſs my longing ſight!
Never, I never hop'd to view this day,
When o'er the waves you plough'd the deſp'rate way.

ter. Homer tells us that the wine of Maron was ſo ſtrong as to require twenty meaſures of water to one of wine; but perhaps this is ſpoken hyperbollically, to ſhew the uncommon ſtrength of it. The Lacedæmonians uſed to boil their wine till the fifth part was conſumed, and then keeping it four years, drank it; but ſometimes the Grecians drank it without water (but this they called reproachfully ἰνιστυθίζειν, or to act like a Scythian, from whom they borrowed the cuſtom.) It was uſual even for children to drink wine thus tempered amongſt the Grecians, thus in this book Eurymachus,

—— ἐπίσχεῖ δὲ οἶνον ἐρυθρόν.

And Phœnix in the ninth of the Iliad, ſpeaking of Achilles;

—— οἶνον ἐπίσχων
Πολλάκι μοι κατέδυσας.

At Athens there was an altar erected to Bacchus ὄρθιος, becauſe from thus tempering the wine men returned *upright* or ſober from entertainments; and a law was enacted by Amphytrion, and afterwards revived by Solon, that no unmixed wine ſhould be drank at any entertainment.

Enter my child! beyond my hopes reſtor'd,
O give theſe eyes to feaſt upon their lord.
Enter, oh ſeldom ſeen! for lawleſs pow'rs
Too much detain thee from theſe ſilvan bow'rs.
The prince reply'd; Eumæus, I obey;
To ſeek thee, friend, I hither took my way.
But ſay, if in the court the queen reſide,
Severely chaſte, or if commenc'd a bride?

v. 33. ——— *if in the court the queen reſide*
Securely chaſte, or if commenc'd a bride?]

Homer here makes uſe of a proverbial expreſſion. It may thus be literally tranſlated,

Or ſay if obſtinate no more to wed,
She dooms to ſpiders nets th' imperial bed:

Telemachus means by this queſtion, if Penelope be determined no more to marry; for the marriage bed was eſteemed ſo ſacred, that upon the deceaſe or abſence of the huſband, it remained unuſed.

Euſtathius quotes the ſame expreſſion from other authors of antiquity; thus Heſiod,

Ἐκ δ' ἀλγίων ἱλασίας ἀράχνια.

"You ſhall clear the veſſels from ſpiders webs;" meaning that *you ſhall have ſo full employment for your veſſels, that the ſpiders ſhall no more ſpread their looms there.* And another poet praying for peace, wiſhes ſpiders may weave their nets upon the ſoldiers arms; ἵτις δ' ποιήτης ἰθίλων αἰχήιην αὔξασθαι, ἀράχνης ὑφάνας νήματα ὑφάναι τοῖς ὅπλοις. Thus we find among the Greeks it was an expreſſion of dignity, and applied to great and ſerious occaſions; I am not certain that it is ſo uſed by the Romans. Catullus uſes it jocoſely, ſpeaking of his empty purſe.

——— "nam tui Catulli
"Plenus ſacculus eſt aranearum."

Thus he: and thus the monarch of the ſwains;
Severely chaſte Penelope remains,
But loſt to ev'ry joy, ſhe waſtes the day
In tedious cares, and weeps the night away.

He ended, and (receiving as they paſs
The jav'lin, pointed with a ſtar of braſs)
They reach'd the dome; the dome with marble ſhin'd.
His ſeat Ulyſſes to the prince reſign'd.
Not ſo—(exclaims the prince with decent grace)
For me, this houſe ſhall find an humbler place:
T' uſurp the honours due to ſilver hairs
And rev'rend ſtrangers, modeſt youth forbears.

Plautus does the ſame in his Aulularia:

— — — "anne quis ædes auferat?
"Nam hic apud nos nihil eſt aliud quæſti furibus,
"Ita inaniis ſunt oppletæ, atque araneis."

I am doubtful if it be not too mean an image for Engliſh poetry.

v. 43. *Not ſo —— (exclaims the prince——]* Nothing can more ſtrongly repreſent the reſpect which antiquity paid to ſtrangers, than this conduct of Telemachus: Ulyſſes is in rags, in the diſguiſe of a beggar, and yet a prince refuſes to take his ſeat. I doubt not but every good man will be pleaſed with ſuch inſtances of benevolence and humanity to his fellow-creatures: one well-natured action is preferable to a thouſand great ones, and Telemachus appears with more advantage upon this heap of hides and oſiers, than a tyrant upon his throne.

Inſtant the ſwain the ſpoils of beaſts ſupplies,
And bids the rural throne with oſiers riſe.
There ſat the prince: the feaſt Eumæus ſpread,
And heap'd the ſhining caniſters with bread.
Thick o'er the board the plenteous viands lay,
The frugal remnants of the former day.
Then in a bowl he tempers gen'rous wines,
Around whoſe verge a mimick ivy twines.
And now the rage of thirſt and hunger fled,
Thus young Ulyſſes to Eumæus ſaid.
Whence father, from what ſhore this ſtranger, ſay!
What veſſel bore him o'er the wat'ry way?
To human ſtep our land impervious lies,
And round the coaſt circumfluent oceans riſe.

v. 52. *The frugal remnants of the former day.*] This entertainment is neither to be aſcribed to parſimony nor poverty, but to the cuſtom and hoſpitality of former ages. It was a common expreſſion among the Greeks at table, *leave ſomething for the Medes*; intimating that ſomething ought to be left for a gueſt that might come accidentally. Plutarch in his ſeventh book of the Sympoſ. Queſtion 3 commends this conduct. Eumæus (ſays that author) a wiſe ſcholar of a wiſe maſter, is no way diſcompoſed when Telemachus pays him a viſit, he immediately ſets before him

The frugal remnants of the former day.

Beſides the table was accounted ſacred to the Gods, and nothing that was ſacred was permitted to be empty; this was another reaſon why the ancients always reſerved part of their proviſions, not ſolely out of hoſpitality to men, but piety to the Gods.

The ſwain returns. A tale of ſorrows hear;
In ſpacious Crete he drew his natal air,
Long doom'd to wander o'er the land and main,
For Heav'n has wove his thread of life with pain.
Half-breathleſs 'ſcaping to the land he flew
From Theſprot mariners, a murd'rous crew.
To thee, my ſon, the ſuppliant I reſign,
I gave him my protection, grant him thine.
Hard taſk, he cries, thy virtue gives thy friend,
Willing to aid, unable to defend.

v. 70. *Willing to aid.*——] It has been obſerved that Homer intended to give us the picture of a complete hero in his two poems, drawn from the characters of Achilles and Ulyſſes: Achilles has conſummate valour, but wants the wiſdom of Ulyſſes: Ulyſſes has courage, but courage inclining to caution and ſtratagem, as much as that of Achilles to raſhneſs. Virgil endeavoured to form a complete hero in Æneas, by joining in his perſon the forward courage of Achilles, with the wiſdom of Ulyſſes, and by this conduct gives us a perfect character. The ſame obſervation holds good with reſpect to the ſubordinate characters introduced into the two poems of the Iliad and Odyſſey: and makes an eſſential difference between them: thus the Iliad exhibiting an example of heroick valour, almoſt all the characters are violent and heroick. Diomed, Ajax, Hector, &c. are all chiefly remarkable for courage: but the Odyſſey being intended to repreſent the patience and wiſdom of an hero, almoſt all the characters are diſtinguiſhed by benevolence and humanity. Telemachus and Eumæus, Alcinous, Neſtor, and Menelaus are every where repreſented in the mild light of wiſdom and hoſpitality. This makes a continued difference of ſtyle in the poetry of the two poems, and the characters of the agents in the

Can ſtrangers ſafely in the court reſide,
Midſt the ſwell'd inſolence of luſt and pride?
Ev'n I unſafe: the queen in doubt to wed,
Or pay due honours to the nuptial bed?
Perhaps ſhe weds regardleſs of her fame,
Deaf to the mighty Ulyſſæan name.
However, ſtranger! from our grace receive
Such honours as befit a prince to give;

Odyſſey neceſſarily exhibit lectures of piety and morality. The reader ſhould keep this in his view. In reading Homer, the Odyſſey is to be looked upon as a ſequel of the Iliad, and then he will find in the two poems the perfection of human nature, conſummate courage joined with conſummate piety. He muſt be an unobſerving reader, who has not taken notice of that *vein of humanity* that runs through the whole Odyſſey; and a bad man, that has not been pleaſed with it. In my opinion, Eumæus tending his herds is more amiable than Achilles in all his deſtructive glory. There is ſcarce a ſpeech made in the Odyſſey by Eumæus, Telemachus or Ulyſſes, bnt what tends to the improvement of mankind: it was this that endeared the Odyſſey to the ancients, and Homer's ſentences of morality were in every mouth, and introduced in all converſations for the better conduct of human life. This verſe was thus applied by ſome of the antients; a perſon being aſked what was the duty of an orator, or pleader, anſwered from Homer,

Ἀνδ' ἀπαμύνασθαι ὅτι τις ᾠῳτίῳ χαλεπήνῃ.

In ſhort, I will not deny but that the Iliad is by far the nobler poem with reſpect to the poetry; it is fit to be read by kings and heroes; but the Odyſſey is of uſe to all mankind, as it teaches us to be good men rather than great, and to prefer morality to glory.

Sandals, a ſword, and robes, reſpect to prove,
And ſafe to ſail with ornaments of love.
'Till then, thy gueſt amid the rural train
Far from the court, from danger far, detain.
'Tis mine with food the hungry to ſupply,
And cloath the naked from th' inclement ſky.
Here dwell in ſafety from the ſuitors wrongs,
And the rude inſults of ungovern'd tongues.
For ſhould'ſt thou ſuffer, pow'rleſs to relieve
I muſt behold it, and can only grieve.
The brave encompaſs'd by an hoſtile train,
O'erpower'd by numbers, is but brave in vain.
To whom, while anger in his boſom glows,
With warmth replies the man of mighty woes.

v. 92. *With warmth replies the man of mighty woes.*] There is not a more ſpirited ſpeech in all the Odyſſey than this of Ulyſſes; his reſentment ariſes from the laſt words of Telemachus, obſerves Euſtathius:

> The brave encompaſs'd by an hoſtile train,
> O'erpower'd by numbers, is but brave in vain.

He is preparing his ſon for the deſtruction of the ſuitors, and animating him againſt deſpair by reaſon of their numbers. This he brings about, by repreſenting that a brave man in a good cauſe prefers death to diſhonour. By the ſame method Homer exalts the character of Ulyſſes: Telemachus thinks it impoſſible to reſiſt the ſuitors, Ulyſſes not only reſiſts them, but almoſt without aſſiſtance works their deſtruction. There is a fine contraſt between the tried courage of Ulyſſes, and the inexperience of Telemachus.

Since audience mild is deign'd, permit my tongue
At once to pity and reſent thy wrong.
My heart weeps blood to ſee a ſoul ſo brave
Live to baſe inſolence of pow'r a ſlave.
But tell me, doſt thou, prince, doſt thou behold,
And hear, their midnight revels uncontroll'd?
Say, do thy ſubjects in bold faction riſe,
Or prieſts in fabled oracles adviſe?
Or are thy brothers, who ſhould aid thy pow'r,
Turn'd mean deſerters in the needful hour?
O that I were from great Ulyſſes ſprung,
Or that theſe wither'd nerves like thine were ſtrung;
Or, Heav'ns! might he return! (and ſoon appear
He ſhall, I truſt; a hero ſcorns deſpair)

v. 105. ——— (*And ſoon appear*
He ſhall, I truſt; a hero ſcorns deſpair).]

Some antient criticks, as Euſtathius informs us, rejected this verſe, and thus read the paſſage:

Ἦ παῖς ἐξ Ὀδυσῆος ἀμύμονος, ἠὲ καὶ αὐτὸς;
Αὐτίκ' ἔπειτ' ἀπ' ἐμεῖο κάρη τῶμοι ἀλλότριον φώς.

Then the ſenſe will be, *Oh that I were the ſon of Ulyſſes, or Ulyſſes himſelf*, &c.

For, add they, if this verſe be admitted, it breaks the tranſport of Ulyſſes's reſentment, and cools the warmth of the expreſſion; Euſtathius confeſſes that he was once of the ſame opinion, but afterwards ſeems dubious; for, continues he, Ulyſſes by ſaying, *Oh that I were the ſon of Ulyſſes, or Ulyſſes himſelf*, gave room to ſuſpect that he was himſelf Ulyſſes; and therefore to efface this impreſſion, he adds with great addreſs,

Might he return, I yield my life a prey
To my worſt foe, if that avenging day
Be not their laſt: but ſhould I loſe my life
Oppreſs'd by numbers in the glorious ſtrife,
I chuſe the nobler part, and yield my breath,
Rather than bear diſhonour, worſe than death;
Than ſee the hand of violence invade
The rev'rend ſtranger, and the ſpotleſs maid;
Than ſee the wealth of kings conſum'd in waſte,
The drunkards revel, and the gluttons feaſt.
Thus he, with anger flaſhing from his eye;
Sincere the youthful hero made reply.
Nor leagu'd in factious arms my ſubjects riſe,
Nor prieſts in fabled oracles adviſe;

— — — (And ſoon appear
He ſhall, I truſt: a hero ſcorns deſpair)

And by this method removes all jealouſy that might ariſe from his former expreſſion. Dacier miſrepreſents Euſtathius; ſhe ſays, *Il avoit donnè lieu à quelque ſubçon qu'il ne fuſt veritablement Ulyſſe*; whereas he directly ſays μὴ ὑποπτευθῇ ὅτι Ὀδύσσευς ἔϛιν ὁ λαλῶν, that is, "he uſes this expreſ-"ſion, that it may not be ſuſpected that he is Ulyſſes who "ſpeaks:" in reality he inferts theſe words ſolely to avoid diſcovery, not judging it yet reaſonable to reveal himſelf to Telemachus, much leſs to Eumæus.

v. 108. *To my worſt foe.*] The words in Greek are ἀλλοδαπῷ φωϛί, or, *may I fall by the hand of a ſtranger*: that is, by the worſt of enemies, foreigners being uſually the moſt barbarous enemies. This circumſtance therefore aggravates the calamity. *Euſtathius.*

Nor are my brothers who ſhould aid my pow'r
Turn'd mean deſerters in the needful hour.
Ah me! I boaſt no brother; Heav'n's dread King
Gives from our ſtock an only branch to ſpring:
Alone Laertes reign'd Arceſius' heir,
Alone Ulyſſes drew the vital air,
And I alone the bed connubial grac'd,
An unbleſt offſpring of a ſire unbleſt!
Each neighb'ring realm, conducive to our woe,
Sends forth her peers, and ev'ry peer a foe:
The court proud Samos and Dulichium fills,
And lofty Zacinth crown'd with ſhady hills,
Ev'n Ithaca and all her lords invade
Th' imperial ſcepter, and the regal bed:
The queen averſe to love, yet aw'd by pow'r,
Seems half to yield, yet flies the bridal hour:
Meantime their licence uncontroll'd, I bear;
Ev'n now they envy me the vital air:
But Heav'n will ſure revenge, and Gods there are.
But go, Eumæus! to the queen impart
Our ſafe return, and eaſe a mother's heart.

v. 127. *And I alone the bed connubial grac'd.*] Homer mentions but one ſon of Ulyſſes; other authors name another, Archeſilaus; and Sophocles, Eurylaus ſlain by Telemachus; but perhaps theſe deſcended not from Penelope. *Euſtathius.*

v. 140. *But go, Eumæus! to the queen impart.*] There is nothing more wonderful in Homer, than the diſtribution of his incidents; and how fully muſt he be poſſeſſed of his whole ſubject, and take it in all at one view, to bring

Yet ſecret go; for num'rous are my foes,
And here at leaſt I may in peace repoſe.
To whom the ſwain; I hear and I obey:
But old Laertes weeps his life away,
And deems thee loſt: ſhall I my ſpeed employ
To bleſs his age; a meſſenger of joy?
The mournful hour that tore his ſon away
Sent the ſad ſire in ſolitude to ſtray;
Yet buſied with his ſlaves, to eaſe his woe,
He dreſt the vine, and bade the garden blow,
Nor food nor wine refus'd: but ſince the day
That you to Pylos plough'd the wat'ry way,
Nor wine nor food he taſtes; but ſunk in woes,
Wild ſprings the vine, no more the garden blows:
Shut from the walks of men, to pleaſure loſt,
Penſive and pale he wanders, half a ghoſt.

about the ſeveral parts of it naturally? Minerva in the beginning of the fifteenth book commanded Telemachus to diſpatch Eumæus to Penelope, to inform her of his return. Here this command is executed: but is this all the uſe the poet makes of that errand? It is evident it is not; this command furniſhes him with a natural occaſion for the removal of Eumæus while Ulyſſes diſcovers himſelf to Telemachus. But why might not the diſcovery have been made before Eumæus? It was ſuitable to the cautious character of Ulyſſes not to truſt the knowledge of his perſon to too many people: beſides, if he had here revealed himſelf to Eumæus, there would not have been room for the diſcovery which is made in the future parts of the Odyſſey, and conſequently the reader had been robbed of the pleaſure of it: and it muſt be allowed, that the ſeveral concealments and diſcoveries of Ulyſſes through the Odyſſey add no ſmall pleaſure and beauty to it.

Wretched old man! (with tears the prince returns)
Yet ceaſe to go—what man ſo bleſt but mourns?
Were ev'ry wiſh indulg'd by fav'ring ſkies,
This hour ſhould give Ulyſſes to my eyes.

v. 159. *Yet ceaſe to go—what man ſo bleſt but mourns?*] Euſtathius reads the words differently, either ἀχνύμενον περ, or ἀχνύμενοι περ. If we uſe the former reading, it will be underſtood according to the recited tranſlation; if the latter, it muſt then be referred to Telemachus, and imply, *let us ceaſe to inform Laertes, though we grieve for him.* I ſuppoſe ſome criticks were ſhocked at the words in the former ſenſe, and thought it cruel in Telemachus, not to relieve the ſorrows of Laertes, which were occaſioned chiefly through fondneſs to his perſon: Dacier is fully of this opinion: Euſtathius prefers neither of the lections; I doubt not but Homer wrote ἀχνύμενον περ; this agrees with the whole context.

Wretched old man! (with tears the prince returns)
Yet ceaſe to go—what man ſo bleſt but mourns?
Were every wiſh indulg'd by fav'ring ſkies,
This hour ſhould give Ulyſſes to my eyes.

And as for the cruelty of Telemachus, in forbidding Eumæus to go to Laertes, there is no room for this objection: he guards againſt it, by requeſting Penelope to give him immediate information; which might be done almoſt as ſoon by a meſſenger from her, as by Eumæus. Beſides, ſuch a meſſage to Laertes would be entirely foreign to the poem; for his knowledge of the return of Telemachus could contribute nothing to the deſign of the Odyſſey: whereas the information given to Penelope has this effect; it puts the ſuitors upon new meaſures, and inſtructs her how to regulate her own conduct with regard to them; and therefore the poet judiciouſly dwells upon this, and paſſes over the other.

But to the queen with ſpeed diſpatchful bear
Our ſafe return, and back with ſpeed repair:
And let ſome handmaid of her train reſort
To good Laertes in his rural court.
While yet he ſpoke, impatient of delay
He brac'd his ſandals on, and ſtrode away:
Then from the heav'ns the martial Goddeſs flies
Thro' the wide fields of air, and cleaves the ſkies;
In form, a virgin in ſoft beauty's bloom,
Skill'd in th' illuſtrious labours of the loom.

v. 170. *In form, a virgin*—] Some of the antient philoſophers thought the poets guilty of impiety, in repreſenting the Gods aſſuming human appearances; Plato in particular (lib. ii. de Repub.) ſpeaks with great ſeverity. "If a God (ſays that author) changes his own ſhape, "muſt he aſſume a more or leſs perfect form? undoubt-"edly a ſhape leſs perfect; for a Deity, as a Deity, can "want no perfection; therefore all change muſt be for "the worſe: now it is abſurd to imagine that a Deity "can be willing to aſſume imperfection, for this would be "a degradation unworthy of a divine power, and conſe-"quently it is abſurd to imagine that a Deity can be wil-"ling to change the form of a Deity; it therefore follows, "that the Gods enjoying a perfection of nature, muſt "eternally and unchangeably appear in it. Let no poet "therefore (meaning Homer) perſuade you that the Gods "aſſume the form of ſtrangers, and are viſible in ſuch "appearances." It muſt be confeſſed, that if Plato had thus ſpoken only to refute the abſurd opinions of antiquity, which imagined the Gods to aſſume unworthy ſhapes of bulls, dragons, ſwans, &c. only to perform ſome rape, or action unbecoming a Deity, reaſon would have

Alone to Ithacus ſhe ſtood diſplay'd,
But unapparent as a viewleſs ſhade
Eſcap'd Telemachus: (the Pow'rs above
Seen or unſeen, o'er earth at pleaſure move)
The dogs intelligent confeſs'd the tread
Of pow'r divine, and howling, trembling fled.

been on his ſide: but the argument proves too much; it ſuppoſes that a Deity muſt loſe his perfections by any appearance, but of a Deity; which is an errour: if a God acts ſuitably to the character of a God, where is the degradation? Ariſtotle was of this judgment, in oppoſition to his maſter Plato; and thought it no diminution to a God to appear in the ſhape of man, the glory of the creation: in reality, it is a great honour to Homer, that his opinions agree with the verity of the ſcriptures, rather than the conjectures of philoſophers; nay, it is not impoſſible but theſe relations might be borrowed from the ſacred hiſtory: it being manifeſt that Homer had been in Ægypt, the native country of Moſes, in whoſe writings there are frequent inſtances of this nature.

v. 176. *The dogs intelligent confeſs'd the tread*
Of pow'r divine——]

This may ſeem a circumſtance unworthy of poetry, and ridiculous to aſcribe a greater ſagacity to the brute creation, than to man; but it may be anſwered, that it was the deſign of the Goddeſs to be inviſible only to Telemachus, and conſequently ſhe was viſible to the dogs. But I am willing to believe that there is a deeper meaning, and a beautiful moral couched under this ſtory: and perhaps Homer ſpeaks thus, to give us to underſtand, that the brute creation itſelf confeſſes the divinity. *Dacier.*

The Goddeſs, bec'kning, waves her deathleſs hands;
Dauntleſs the king before the Goddeſs ſtands.
Then why (ſhe ſaid) O favour'd of the ſkies!
Why to thy god-like ſon this long diſguiſe? 181
Stand forth reveal'd: with him thy cares employ
Againſt thy foes; be valiant, and deſtroy!
Lo I deſcend in that avenging hour,
To combat by thy ſide thy guardian Pow'r. 185
She ſaid, and o'er him waves her wand of gold;
Imperial robes his manly limbs infold;

v. 178. *The Goddeſs, beck'ning, waves her deathleſs hands.*] The Goddeſs evidently acts thus, that Telemachus might not hear her ſpeak to Ulyſſes; for this would have made the diſcovery, and precluded that beautiful interview between Ulyſſes and Telemachus that immediately follows. It is for the ſame reaſon that ſhe conceals herſelf from Telemachus, for the diſcovery muſt have been fully and convincingly made by the appearance and veracity of a Deity; and then there could have been no room for all thoſe doubts and fears of Telemachus, that enliven and beautify the manner of the diſcovery. The whole relation is indeed an allegory: the wiſdom of Ulyſſes (in poetry, Minerva) ſuggeſts to him, that this is a proper time to reveal himſelf to Telemachus; the ſame wiſdom (or Minerva) inſtructs him to dreſs himſelf like a king, that he may find the readier credit with his ſon: in this dreſs he appears a new man, young and beautiful, which gives occaſion to Telemachus to imagine him a Deity; eſpecially becauſe he was an infant when his father ſailed to Troy, and therefore though he now appears like Ulyſſes, Telemachus does not know him to be his father. This is the naked ſtory, when ſtript of its poetical ornaments.

At once with grace divine his frame improves;
At once with majeſty enlarg'd he moves:
Youth fluſh'd his red'ning cheek, and from his brows
A length of hair in ſable ringlets flows;
His black'ning chin receives a deeper ſhade;
Then from his eyes upſprung the Warriour-maid.
The hero re-aſcends: the prince o'eraw'd
Scarce lifts his eyes, and bows as to a God.

v. 194. — *The prince o'eraw'd*
Scarce lifts his eyes, and bows as to a God.]

I muſt offer a remark in oppoſition to that of Dacier upon this place: "This fear of Telemachus (ſays that author) "proceeds from the opinion of the antients when the "Gods came down viſibly; they thought themſelves ſo "unworthy of ſuch a manifeſtation, that whenever it "happened, they believed they ſhould die, or meet with "ſome great calamity": thus the Iſraelites addreſs Moſes: *Speak thou to us, and we will hear, but let not the Lord ſpeak to us, leſt we die.* Thus alſo Gideon; *Alas! O Lord, my God, becauſe I have ſeen an angel of the Lord face to face; and the Lord ſaid to him, Fear not, thou ſhalt not die.* Hence it is very evident, that this notion prevailed amongſt the Iſraelites: but how does it appear that the Greeks held the ſame opinion? The contrary is manifeſt almoſt to a demonſtration: the Gods are introduced almoſt in every book both of the Iliad and Odyſſey; and yet there is not the leaſt foundation for ſuch an aſſertion: nay, Telemachus himſelf in the ſecond book returns thanks to Minerva for appearing to him, and prays for a ſecond viſion.

O Goddeſs! who deſcending from the ſkies,
Vouchſaf'd thy preſence to my longing eyes;

Then with ſurpriſe (ſurpriſe chaſtis'd by fears)
How art thou chang'd! (he cry'd) a God appears!
Far other veſts thy limbs majeſtic grace,
Far other glories lighten from thy face!
If heav'n be thy abode, with pious care
Lo! I the ready ſacrifice prepare:
Lo! gifts of labour'd gold adorn thy ſhrine,
To win thy grace: O ſave us, Pow'r divine!
Few are my days, Ulyſſes made reply,
Nor I, alas! deſcendant of the ſky.
I am thy father. O my ſon! my ſon!
That father, for whoſe ſake thy days have run
One ſcene of woe; to endleſs cares conſign'd,
And outrag'd by the wrongs of baſe mankind.

Hear from thy heav'ns above, O warriour Maid,
Deſcend once more propitious to my aid!

It is not to be imagined that Telemachus would have preferred this prayer, if the preſence of the Deity denoted death, or ſome great calamity; and all the heroes throughout the Iliad eſteem ſuch intercourſes as their glory, and converſe with the Gods without any apprehenſions. But whence then proceeds this fear of Telemachus? entirely from a reverential awe and his own modeſty while he ſtands in the preſence of a Deity; for ſuch he believes Ulyſſes. The words of Telemachus agree with his behaviour; he ſpeaks the language of a man in ſurpriſe: it is this ſurpriſe at the ſudden change of Ulyſſes, that firſt makes him imagine him a Deity, and upon that imagination offer him ſacrifice and prayer; the whole behaviour paints the nature of man under ſurpriſe, and which tranſports the ſpeaker into vehemence and emotion.

Then ruſhing to his arms, he kiſs'd his boy
With the ſtrong raptures of a parent's joy.
Tears bathe his cheek, and tears the ground bedew:
He ſtrain'd him cloſe, as to his breaſt he grew.
Ah me! (exclaims the prince with fond deſire)
Thou art not——no, thou canſt not be my ſire.
Heav'n ſuch illuſion only can impoſe,
By the falſe joy to aggravate my woes.
Who but a God can change the general doom,
And give to wither'd age a youthful bloom?
Late, worn with years, in weeds obſcene you trod;
Now, cloath'd in majeſty, you move a God!
Forbear, he cry'd; for Heav'n reſerve that name,
Give to thy father but a father's claim:
Other Ulyſſes ſhalt thou never ſee,
I am Ulyſſes, I (my ſon) am he.
Twice ten ſad years o'er earth and ocean toſt,
'Tis giv'n at length to view my native coaſt.
Pallas, unconquer'd Maid, my frame ſurrounds
With grace divine; her pow'r admits no bounds:
She o'er my limbs old age and wrinkles ſhed;
Now ſtrong as youth, magnificent I tread.
The Gods with eaſe frail man depreſs or raiſe,
Exalt the lowly, or the proud debaſe.
He ſpoke and ſat. The prince with tranſport flew,
Hung round his neck, while tears his cheek bedew;
Nor leſs the father pour'd a ſocial flood!
They wept abundant, and they wept aloud.

As the bold eagle with fierce ſorrow ſtung,
Or parent vultur, mourns her raviſh'd young;

v. 238. *As the bold eagle——*] This is a beautiful compariſon; but to take its full force, it is neceſſary to obſerve the nature of this φήνη or *vultur*: Homer does not compare Ulyſſes to that bird merely for its dignity, it being of the aquiline kind, and therefore the king of birds; but from the knowledge of the nature of it, which doubles the beauty of the alluſion: this bird is remarkable for the love it bears towards its young: *Tearing open her own thigh, ſhe feeds her young with her own blood*: thus alſo another author;

Τὸν μηρὸν ἐκλίμνουσαι, ἁμαλωμένοις
Γάλακτος ὀλκοῖς Ζωπύρουσι τὰ βρέφη.

Femore exſecto, ſanguineo lactis defluxu ſuos fœtus refocillant. And the Ægyptians made the vultur their hieroglyphic, to repreſent a compaſſionate nature. This gives a reaſon why this bird is introduced with peculiar propriety to repreſent the fondneſs of Ulyſſes for Telemachus. But where is the point of the ſimilitude? Ulyſſes embraces his ſon, but the vultur is ſaid to mourn the loſs of her young: Euſtathius anſwers, that the ſorrow alone, and vehemence of it, is intended to be illuſtrated by the compariſon; I think he ſhould have added the affection Ulyſſes bears to Telemachus.

It is obſervable, that Homer inſerts very few ſimilitudes in his Odyſſey, though they occur frequently almoſt in every book of the Iliad. The Odyſſey is wrote with more ſimplicity, and conſequently there is leſs room for alluſions. If we obſerve the ſimilies themſelves inſerted in each poem, we ſhall find the ſame difference: in the Iliad they are drawn from lions, ſtorms, torrents, conflagrations, thunder, &c. In the Odyſſey, from lower objects, from an heap of thorns, from a ſhip-wright ply-

They cry, they ſcream, their unfledg'd brood a prey
To ſome rude churl, and borne by ſtealth away;

ing the wimble, an armourer tempering iron, a matron weeping over her dying huſband, &c. The ſimilies are likewiſe generally longer in the Iliad than the Odyſſey, and leſs reſemblance between the thing illuſtrated, and the illuſtration; the reaſon is, in the Iliad the ſimilitudes are introduced to illuſtrate ſome great and noble object, and therefore the poet proceeds till he has raiſed ſome noble image to inflame the mind of the reader; whereas in theſe calmer ſcenes the poet keeps cloſer to the point of alluſion, and needs only to repreſent the object, to render it entertaining: by the former conduct he raiſes our admiration above the ſubject, by adding foreign embelliſhments; in the latter he brings the copy as cloſe as poſſible to the original, to poſſeſs us with a true and equal image of it.

It has been objected by a French critick, that Homer is blameable for too great a length in his ſimilitudes; that in the heat of an action he ſtops ſhort, and turns to ſome alluſion, which calls off our attention from the main ſubject. It is true, compariſons ought not to be too long, and are not to be placed in the heat of an action, as Mr. Dryden obſerves, but when it begins to decline: thus in the firſt Æneis, when the ſtorm is in its fury, the poet introduces no compariſon, becauſe nothing can be more impetuous than the ſtorm itſelf; but when the heat of the deſcription abates, then, leſt we ſhould cool too ſoon, he renews it by ſome proper ſimilitude, which ſtill keeps up our attention, and fixes the whole upon our minds. The ſimilitude before us is thus placed at the concluſion of the hero's lamentation, and the poet by this method leaves the whole deeply fixed upon the memory. Virgil has imitated this compariſon in his fourth Georgic, but very ju-

So they aloud: and tears in tides had run,
Their griefs unfiniſh'd with the ſetting ſun:
But checking the full torrent in its flow,
The prince thus interrupts the ſolemn woe.

diciouſly ſubſtituted the nightingale in the place of the vultur, that bird being introduced to repreſent the mournful muſick of Orpheus.

" Qualis populeâ mœrens Philomela ſub umbrâ
" Amiſſos queritur fœtus, quos durus arator
" Obſervans nido implumes detraxit: at illa
" Flet noctem, &c.

Nothing can be ſweeter than this compariſon of Virgil, but the learned Huetius thinks he has found a notorious blunder in it: this nightingale (ſays he) in the firſt line ſits in the ſhade of a poplar, and yet in the fourth ſhe mourns by night, *flet noctem*. It is evident that Monſieur Huet miſtakes the word *umbra* for the ſhade of a tree, which it caſts while the ſun ſhines upon it; whereas it only means that the bird ſings *ſub foliis*, or concealed in the leaves of it, which may be done by night as well as by day: but if it be thought that this is not a ſufficient anſwer, the paſſage may be thus underſtood: the nightingale mourning under the ſhade of a poplar, &c. ceaſes not all night, or *flet noctem*; that is, ſhe begins her ſong in the evening by day, but mourns all night. Either of theſe anſwers are ſufficient for Virgil's vindication.

v. 245. *The prince thus interrupts the ſolemn woe.*] It does not appear at firſt view why the poet makes Telemachus recover himſelf from his tranſport of ſorrow ſooner than Ulyſſes: is Telemachus a greater maſter of his paſſions? or is it to convince Ulyſſes of his ſon's wiſ-

What ſhip tranſported thee, O father, ſay,
And what bleſs'd hands have oar'd thee on the way?

All, all (Ulyſſes inſtant made reply)
I tell thee all, my child, my only joy!
Phæacians bore me to the port aſſign'd,
A nation ever to the ſtranger kind;
Wrapt in th' embrace of ſleep, the faithful train
O'er ſeas convey'd me to my native reign:
Embroider'd veſtures, gold, and braſs are laid
Conceal'd in caverns in the ſilvan ſhade.

dom, as Euſtathius conjectures? this can ſcarce be ſuppos'd, Ulyſſes being ſuperior in wiſdom. I would chuſe rather to aſcribe it to human nature; for it has been obſerved, that affection ſeldom ſo ſtrongly aſcends, as it deſcends: the child ſeldom loves the father ſo tenderly, as the father the child: this obſervation has been made from the remoteſt antiquity. And it is wiſely deſigned by the great Author of our natures; for in the common courſe of life, the child muſt bury the parent: it is therefore a merciful diſpenſation, that the tie of blood and affection ſhould be looſened by degrees, and not torn violently aſunder in the full ſtrength of it. It is expected that aged perſons ſhould die, their loſs therefore grows more familiar to us, and it loſes much of its horrour through the long expectation of it.

v. 250. *Phæacians bore me to the port aſſign'd.*] Here is a repetition of what the reader knows entirely, from many parts of the preceding ſtory; but it being neceſſary in this place, the poet judiciouſly reduces it into the compaſs of ſix lines, and by this method avoids prolixity. *Euſtathius.*

Hither, intent the rival rout to ſlay
And plan the ſcene of death, I bend my way:
So Pallas wills—but thou, my ſon, explain
The names, and numbers of th' audacious train;
'Tis mine to judge if better to employ
Aſſiſtant force, or ſingly to deſtroy.
O'er earth (returns the prince) reſounds thy name,
Thy well-try'd wiſdom, and thy martial fame,
Yet at thy words I ſtart, in wonder loſt;
Can we engage, not decads, but an hoſt?
Can we alone in furious battle ſtand,
Againſt that num'rous, and determin'd band?
Hear then their numbers: from Dulichium came
Twice twenty-ſix, all peers of mighty name,
Six are their menial train: twice twelve the boaſt
Of Samos; twenty from Zacynthus coaſt:

v. 268. *Hear then their numbers*—] According to this catalogue, the ſuitors with their attendants (the two ſewers, and Medon, and Phemius) are a hundred and eighteen: but the two laſt are not to be taken for the enemies of Ulyſſes; and therefore are not involved in their puniſhment in the concluſion of the Odyſſey. *Euſtathius.*

Spondanus miſtakes this paſſage egregiouſly.

Μέδων κῆρυξ ϑ' ἱερὸς ἀοιδός.

He underſtands it thus, "Medon who was an herald and "a divine bard" *Præco unus qui & idem Muſicus*: it is true, the conſtruction will bear this interpretation; but it is evident from the latter part of the xxiid Odyſſey, that the κῆρυξ and the Ἀοιδὸς were two perſons, namely, Medon and Phemius: Medon acts all along as a friend to Pene-

And twelve our country's pride: to theſe belong
Medon and Phemius ſkill'd in heav'nly ſong.
Two ſew'rs from day to day the revels wait,
Exact of taſte, and ſerve the feaſt in ſtate.
With ſuch a foe th' unequal fight to try,
Were by falſe courage unreveng'd to die.
Then what aſſiſtant pow'rs you boaſt, relate,
Ere yet we mingle in the ſtern debate.
Mark well my voice, Ulyſſes ſtraight replies:
What need of aids, if favour'd by the Skies?
If ſhielded to the dreadful fight we move,
By mighty Pallas, and by thund'ring Jove.
Sufficient they (Telemachus rejoin'd)
Againſt the banded pow'rs of all mankind:
They, high enthron'd above the rolling clouds,
Wither the ſtrength of man, and awe the Gods.
Such aids expect, he cries, when ſtrong in might
We riſe terrifick to the taſk of fight.

lope and Telemachus, and Phemius is affirmed to be detained by the ſuitors involuntarily, and conſequently they are both guiltleſs.

v. 288. *Such aids expect, he cries, when ſtrong in might*
We riſe terrifick to the taſk of fight.]

This whole diſcourſe between Ulyſſes and Telemachus is introduced to prepare the reader for the cataſtrophe of the poem: Homer judiciouſly intereſts Heaven in the cauſe, that the reader may not be ſurpriſed at the event, when he ſees ſuch numbers fall by the hands of theſe heroes: he conſults probability, and as the poem now draws to a concluſion, ſets the aſſiſtance of Heaven full before the reader.

But thou, when morn ſalutes th' aerial plain,
The court reviſit and the lawleſs train:

It is likewiſe very artful to let us into ſome knowledge of the event of the poem; all care muſt be taken that it be rather gueſſed than known. If it be entirely known, the reader finds nothing new to awaken his attention; if on the contrary it be ſo intricate, that the event cannot poſſibly be gueſſed at, we wander in the dark, and are loſt in uncertainty. The art of the poet conſiſts not in concealing the event intirely: but when it is in ſome meaſure foreſeen, in introducing ſuch a number of incidents that now bring us almoſt into the ſight of it, then by new obſtacles perplex the ſtory to the very concluſion of the poem; every obſtacle, and every removal of it fills us with ſurpriſe, with pleaſure or pain alternately, and conſequently calls up our whole attention. This is admirably deſcribed by Vida, lib. ii.

" — — — Eventus nonnullis ſæpe canendo
" Indiciis porrò oſtendunt, in luce malignâ
" Subluſtrique; aliquid dant cernere noctis in umbrâ".

Th' event ſhould glimmer with a dubious ray,
Not hid in clouds nor glare in open day.

This rule he afterwards illuſtrates by a very happy ſimilitude.

" Haud aliter longinqua petit qui forte viator
" Mænia, ſi poſitas altis in collibus arces
" Nunc etiam dubias oculis videt, incipit ultro
" Lætior ire viam, placidumque urgere laborem,
" Quàm cùm nuſquam ullæ cernuntur quas adit arces,
" Obſcurum ſed iter tendit convallibus imis."

The conduct both of Virgil and Homer are agreeable to this obſervation; for inſtance, Anchiſes and Tireſias in the ſhades, foretel Æneas and Ulyſſes that all their troubles

Me thither in diſguiſe Eumæus leads,
An aged mendicant in tatter'd weeds.
There, if baſe ſcorn inſult my rev'rend age;
Bear it, my ſon! repreſs thy riſing rage.
If outrag'd, ceaſe that outrage to repel;
Bear it, my ſon! howe'er thy heart rebel.

ſhall end proſperouſly, that the one ſhall found the Roman empire, the other regain his kingdoms; but the means being kept concealed, our appetite is rather whetted than cloyed, to know by what means theſe events are brought about: thus, as in Vida's alluſion, they ſhew us the city at a great diſtance, but how we are to arrive at it, by what roads they intend to guide us to it, this they keep concealed; the journey diſcovers itſelf, and every ſtep we advance leads us forward, and ſhews where we are to take the next: neither does the poet directly lead us in the ſtraight path: ſometimes we are as it were in a labyrinth, and we know not how to extricate ovrſelves out of it; ſometimes he carries us into bye-ways, and we almoſt loſe ſight of the direct way, and then ſuddenly they open into the chief road, and convey us to the journey's end. In this conſiſts the ſkill of the poet; he muſt form probable intricacies, and then ſolve them probably; he muſt ſet his hero in dangers, and then bring him out of them with honour. This obſervation is neceſſary to be applied to all thoſe paſſages in the Odyſſey, where the event of it is obſcurely foretold, and which ſome taſteleſs critics have blam'd, as taking away the curioſity of the reader by an unſeaſonable diſcovery.

v. 296. *If outrag'd, ceaſe that outrage to repel,*
Bear it my ſon! howe'er thy heart rebel.]

Plutarch in his Treatiſe upon reading Poems, obſerves the wiſdom of Ulyſſes in theſe inſtructions: he is the per-

Yet ſtrive by pray'r and counſel to reſtrain
Their lawleſs inſults, tho' thou ſtrive in vain:
For wicked ears are deaf to wiſdom's call,
And vengeance ſtrikes whom Heav'n has doom'd to fall.
Once more attend: When * She whoſe pow'r inſpires
The thinking mind, my ſoul to vengeance fires;
I give the ſign: that inſtant, from beneath,
Aloft convey the inſtruments of death,

ſon who is more immediately injured, yet he not only reſtrains his own reſentment, but that of Telemachus: he perceives that his ſon is in danger of flying out into ſome paſſion, he therefore very wiſely arms him againſt it. Men do not put bridles upon horſes when they are already running with full ſpeed, but they bridle them before they bring them out to the race: this very well illuſtrates the conduct of Ulyſſes; he fears the youth of Telemachus may be too warm, and through an unſeaſonable ardour at the ſight of his wrongs, betray him to his enemies; he therefore perſuades him to patience and calmneſs, and prediſpoſes his mind with rational conſiderations to enable him to encounter his paſſions, and govern his reſentment.

v. 304. — — — *That inſtant, from beneath,*
Aloft convey the inſtruments of death.]

Theſe ten lines occur in the beginning of the nineteenth book, and the antients (as Euſtathius informs us) were of opinion, that they are here placed improperly; for how, ſay they, ſhould Ulyſſes know that the arms were in a lower apartment, when he was in the country, and had

* Minerva.

Armour and arms; and if miſtruſt ariſe,
Thus veil the truth in plauſible diſguiſe.
" Theſe glitt'ring weapons, ere he ſail'd to
" Troy,
" Ulyſſes view'd with ſtern heroic joy:
" Then, beaming o'er th' illumin'd wall they
" ſhone:
" Now duſt diſhonours, all their luſtre gone.
" I bear them hence (ſo Jove my ſoul inſpires)
" From the pollution of the fuming fires;
" Leſt when the bowl inflames, in vengeful mood
" Ye ruſh to arms, and ſtain the feaſt with
blood;
" Oft ready ſwords in luckleſs hour incite
" The hand of wrath, and arm it for the fight."

not yet ſeen his palace? But this is no real objection; his repoſitory of arms he knew was in the lower apartment, and therefore it was rational to conclude that the arms were in it. The verſes are proper in both places; here Ulyſſes prepares Telemachus againſt the time of the execution of his deſigns; in the nineteenth book that time is come, and therefore he repeats his inſtructions.

v. 316. *Oft ready ſwords in luckleſs hour incite*
The hand of wrath, and arm it for the fight.]

This ſeems to have been a proverbial expreſſion, at leaſt it has been ſo uſed by latter writers: the obſervation holds true to this day, and it is manifeſt that more men fall by the ſword in countries where the inhabitants daily wear ſwords, than in thoſe where a ſword is thought no part of dreſs or ornament. *Dacier.*

Such be the plea, and by the plea deceive:
For Jove infatuates all, and all believe.
Yet leave for each of us a ſword to wield,
A pointed jav'lin, and a fenceful ſhield.
But by my blood that in thy boſom glows,
By that regard a ſon his father owes;
The ſecret, that thy father lives, retain
Lock'd in thy boſom from the houſhold train;
Hide it from all; ev'n from Eumæus hide,
From my dear father, and my dearer bride.
One care remains, to note the loyal few
Whoſe faith yet laſts among the menial crew;
And noting, ere we riſe in vengeance, prove
Who loves his prince; for ſure you merit love.

To whom the youth: to emulate I aim
The brave and wiſe, and my great father's fame.

v. 324. *The ſecret, that thy father lives, retain*
Lock'd in thy boſom ——]

This injunction of ſecrecy is introduced by Ulyſſes with the utmoſt ſolemnity; and it was very neceſſary that it ſhould be ſo; the whole hopes of his re-eſtabliſhment depending upon it: beſides, this behaviour agrees with the character of Ulyſſes, which is remarkable for diſguiſe and concealment. The poet makes a further uſe of it; namely, to give him an opportunity to deſcribe at large the ſeveral diſcoveries made to Penelope, Laertes, and Eumæus perſonally by Ulyſſes, in the ſequel of the Odyſſey, which are no ſmall ornaments to it; yet muſt have been omitted, or have loſt their effect, if the return of Ulyſſes had been made known by Telemachus; this would have been like diſcovering the plot before the be-

But re-conſider, ſince the wiſeſt err,
Veng'ance reſolv'd, 'tis dang'rous to defer.
What length of time muſt we conſume in vain,
Too curious to explore the menial train?
While the proud foes, induſtrious to deſtroy
Thy wealth in riot, the delay enjoy.
Suffice it in this exigence alone
To mark the damſels that attend the throne:
Diſpers'd the youth reſides; their faith to prove
Jove grants henceforth, if thou haſt ſpoke from Jove.

ginning of the play. At the ſame time this direction is an excellent rule to be obſerved in management of all weighty affairs, the ſucceſs of which chiefly depends upon ſecreſy.

v. 334. *But re-conſider*—] The poet here deſcribes Telemachus rectifying the judgment of Ulyſſes; is this any diſparagement to that hero? It is not; but an exact repreſentation of human nature; for the wiſeſt men may receive, in particular caſes, inſtructions from men leſs wiſe; and the eye of the underſtanding in a young man, may ſometimes ſee further than that of age; that is, in the language of the poet, a wiſe and mature Ulyſſes may ſometimes be inſtructed by a young and unexperienced Telemachus.

v. 343. *If thou haſt ſpoke from Jove.*] The expreſſion in the Greek is obſcure, and it may be aſked, to what refers Διὸς πίρας? Dacier renders it, *S'il vray que vous ayez vû un prodige*; or "if it be true that you have ſeen a "prodigy:" now there is no mention of any prodigy ſeen by Ulyſſes in all this interview, and this occaſions the obſcurity; but it is implied, for Ulyſſes directly pro-

While in debate they waſte the hours away,
Th' aſſociates of the prince repaſs'd the bay;
With ſpeed they guide the veſſel to the ſhores;
With ſpeed debarking land the naval ſtores;

miſes the aſſiſtance of Jupiter; and how could he depend upon it, but by ſome prodigy from Jupiter? Euſtathius thus underſtands the words: Τέρας, ἐξ οὗ ἐρωμένους ἔφης ἀμύνεσθαι τὸν Διὸς ἡμῖν ἴστασθαι. And then the meaning will be, "If the prodigy from Jupiter be evident, there is no "occaſion to concern ourſelves about the houſhold train." But then does not that expreſſion imply doubt, and a jealouſy, that Ulyſſes might poſſibly depend too much upon ſupernatural aſſiſtance? It only inſinuates, that he ought to be certain in the interpretation of the prodigy, but Telemachus refers himſelf intirely to Ulyſſes, and acquieſces in his judgment.

v. 345. *Th' aſſociates of the prince repaſs'd the bay.*] It is manifeſt that this veſſel had ſpent the evening of the preceding day, the whole night, and part of the next morning, in ſailing from the place where Telemachus embarked: for it is neceſſary to remember that Telemachus, to avoid the ſuitors, had been obliged to fetch a large compaſs, and land upon the northern coaſt of Ithaca; and conſequently the veſſel was neceſſitated to double the whole iſle on the weſtern ſide to reach the Ithacan bay. This is the reaſon that it arrives not till the day afterwards, and that the herald diſpatched by the aſſociates of Telemachus, and Eumæus from the country, meet upon the road, as they go to carry the news of the return of Telemachus to Penelope. It is likewiſe evident that the lodge of Eumæus was not far diſtant from the palace; for he ſets out toward the city after eating in the morning, and paſſing ſome time in conference with Telemachus, delivers his meſſage, and returns in the evening of the ſame day.

Then faithful to their charge, to Clytius bear,
And truſt the preſents to his friendly care.
Swift to the queen a herald flies t' impart
Her ſon's return, and eaſe a parent's heart;
Leſt a ſad prey to ever-muſing cares,
Pale grief deſtroy what time a-while forbears.

Th' uncautious herald with impatience burns,
And cries aloud; Thy ſon, oh queen, returns:
Eumæus ſage approach'd th' imperial throne,
And breath'd his mandate to her ear alone,
Then meaſur'd back the way—The ſuitor band
Stung to the ſoul, abaſh'd, confounded ſtand;

v. 355. *And cries aloud; Thy ſon, oh queen, returns.*] This little circumſtance diſtinguiſhes characters, and gives variety to poetry: it is a kind of painting, which always varies its figures by ſome particular ornament, or attitude, ſo as no two figures are alike: the contrary conduct would make an equal confuſion both in poetry and painting, and an indiſtinction of perſons and characters. I will not promiſe that theſe particularities are of equal beauty, as neceſſity, eſpecially in modern languages; the Greek is always flowing, ſonorous, and harmonious; the language, like leaves, oftentimes conceals barrenneſs, and a want of fruit, and renders the ſenſe at leaſt beautiful, if not profitable; this is wanted in ſome degree in Engliſh poetry, where it is not always in our power to conceal the nakedneſs with ornaments: this particularity before us is of abſolute neceſſity, and could not well be avoided; the indiſcretion of the herald in ſpeaking aloud, diſcovers the return of Telemachus to the ſuitors, and is the incident that brings about their following debates, and furniſhes out the entertainment of the ſucceeding part of this book.

And iſſuing from the dome, before the gate,
With clouded looks, a pale aſſembly ſat.
At length Eurymachus. Our hopes are vain;
Telemachus in triumph ſails the main.
Haſte, rear the maſt, the ſwelling ſhroud diſplay;
Haſte, to our ambuſh'd friends the news convey!
Scarce had he ſpoke, when turning to the ſtrand
Amphinomus ſurvey'd th' aſſociate band;
Full to the bay within the winding ſhores
With gather'd ſails they ſtood, and lifted oars.
O friends! he cry'd, elate with riſing joy,
See to the port ſecure the veſſel fly!
Some God has told them, or themſelves ſurvey
The bark eſcap'd; and meaſure back their way.
Swift at the word deſcending to the ſhores,
They moor the veſſel and unlade the ſtores:
Then moving from the ſtrand, apart they ſat,
And full and frequent, form'd a dire debate.
Lives then the boy? he lives (Antinous cries)
The care of Gods and fav'rite of the ſkies.
All night we watch'd, till with her orient wheels
Aurora flam'd above the eaſtern hills,
And from the lofty brow of rocks by day
Took-in the ocean with a broad ſurvey:
Yet ſafe he ſails! the Pow'rs cœleſtial give
To ſhun the hidden ſnares of death, and live.
But die he ſhall, and thus condemn'd to bleed,
Be now the ſcene of inſtant death decreed:

Hope ye ſucceſs? undaunted cruſh the foe.
Is he not wiſe? know this, and ſtrike the blow.
Wait ye, till he to arms in council draws
The Greeks, averſe too juſtly to our cauſe?

v. 391. *The Greeks averſe too juſtly to our cauſe.*] This verſe is inſerted with great judgment, and gives an air of probability to the whole relation: for if it be aſked why the ſuitors defer to ſeize the ſupreme power, and to murder Telemachus, they being ſo ſuperior in number? Antinous himſelf anſwers, that they fear the people, who favour the cauſe of Telemachus, and would revenge his injuries: it is for this reaſon that they formed the ambuſh by ſea; and for this reaſon Antinous propoſes to intercept him in his return from the country: they dare not offer open violence, and therefore make uſe of treachery. This ſpeech of Antinous forms a ſhort underplot to the poem; it gives us pain (ſays Euſtathius) for Telemachus, and holds us in ſuſpenſe till the intricacy is unravelled by Amphinomus.

The whole harangue is admirable in Homer: the diction is excellently ſuited to the temper of Antinous, who ſpeaks with precipitation: his mind is in agitation and diſorder, and conſequently his language is abrupt, and not allowing himſelf time to explain his thoughts at full length, he falls into ellipſes and abbreviations. For inſtance, he is to ſpeak againſt Telemachus, but his contempt and reſentment will not permit him to mention his name, he therefore calls him τὸν ἄνδρα; thus in μήτι κακὸν ῥέζωσι, δέδοικα is underſtood, thus likewiſe in this verſe,

Ἀλλ' ἄγετε περὶ πεῖνον ὁμηγυρίσασθαι Ἀχαιοὺς
Εἰς ἀγορήν ———

the word ἐλοθρεύσωμεν, or ἀνέλωμεν, muſt be underſtood, to make the ſenſe intelligible. Thus alſo after εἰ δ' ὑμῖν δὲ μῦθος ἀφαυδάνει, to make Ἀλλὰ in the next ſentence begin it

Strike, ere, the ſtates conven'd, the foe betray
Our murd'rous ambuſh on the wat'ry way.
Or chuſe ye vagrant from their rage to fly
Outcaſts of earth, to breathe an unknown ſky?
The brave prevent misfortune; then be brave,
And bury future danger in his grave.
Returns he? ambuſh'd we'll his walk invade,
Or where he hides in ſolitude and ſhade:
And give the palace to the queen a dow'r,
Or him ſhe bleſſes in the bridal hour.
But if ſubmiſſive you reſign the ſway,
Slaves to a boy; go, flatter and obey.
Retire we inſtant to our native reign,
Nor be the wealth of kings conſum'd in vain;
Then wed whom choice approves: the queen be giv'n
To ſome bleſt prince, the prince decreed by Heav'n.

ſignificantly, we muſt ſupply καὶ ὃ δοκεῖ καλὸν ὁ φόνος; then the ſenſe is complete; *If this opinion diſpleaſe, and his death appear not honourable*, but you would have him live, &c. otherwiſe ἀλλὰ βούλεσθε muſt be conſtrued like βούλεσθε εἶ; and laſtly, to image the diſorder of Antinous more ſtrongly, Homer inſerts a falſe quantity, by making the firſt ſyllable in βούλεσθε ſhort. Antinous attends not, through the violence of his ſpirit, to the words he utters, and therefore falls into this error, which excellently repreſents it. It is impoſſible to retain theſe ellipſes in the tranſlation, but I have endeavoured to ſhew the warmth of the ſpeaker, by putting the words into interrogations, which are always uttered with vehemence, and are ſigns of hurry and precipitation.

Abaſh'd, the ſuitor train his voice attends;
'Till from his throne Amphinomus aſcends,
Who o'er Dulichium ſtretch'd his ſpacious reign,
A land of plenty, bleſt with ev'ry grain:
Chief of the numbers who the queen addreſt,
And tho' diſpleaſing, yet diſpleaſing leaſt.
Soft were his words; his actions wiſdom ſway'd;
Graceful a-while he paus'd, then mildly ſaid.

O friends forbear! and be the thought withſtood:
'Tis horrible to ſhed imperial blood!
Conſult we firſt th' all-ſeeing Pow'rs above,
And the ſure oracles of righteous Jove.

v. 413. *And tho' diſpleaſing, yet diſpleaſing leaſt.*] We are not to gather from this expreſſion, that Penelope had any particular tenderneſs for Amphinomus, but it means only that he was a perſon of ſome juſtice and moderation. At firſt view, there ſeems no reaſon why the poet ſhould diſtinguiſh Amphinomus from the reſt of the ſuitors, by giving him this humane character; but in reality there is an abſolute neceſſity for it. Telemachus is doomed to die by Antinous: here is an intricacy formed, and how is that hero to be preſerved with probability? The poet aſcribes a greater degree of tenderneſs and moderation to one of the ſuitors, and by this method preſerves Telemachus. Thus wee ſee the leaſt circumſtance in Homer has its uſe and effect; the art of a good painter is viſible in the ſmalleſt ſketch, as well as in the largeſt draught.

v. 419. *And the ſure oracles of righteous Jove.*] Strabo, lib. vii. quotes this verſe of Homer, and tells us that ſome criticks thus read it.

If they aſſent, ev'n by this hand he dies;
If they forbid, I war not with the ſkies.
He ſaid: The rival train his voice approv'd,
And riſing inſtant to the palace mov'd.
Arriv'd, with wild tumultuous noiſe they ſat,
Recumbent on the ſhining thrones of ſtate.

Εἰ μὲν κ' αἰνήσωσι Διὸς μεγάλοιο τομῆες.

preferring τομῆες to θέμιστες; for, add they, θέμιστες no where in Homer ſignifies oracles, but conſtantly laws or councils. Tmarus or Tomarus was a mountain on which the oracle of Jupiter ſtood, and in proceſs of time it was uſed to denote the oracles themſelves. Τόμαρος is formed like the word ὁμαρὸς, the former ſignifies *cuſtos Tmari*, the latter *cuſtos domûs*: in this ſenſe Amphinomus adviſes to conſult the Dodonian oracles, which were given from the mountain Tmarus: but, adds Strabo, Homer is to be underſtood more plainly; and by θέμιστες, the councils, the will, and deciſions of the oracles are implied, for thoſe deciſions were held as laws; thus βουλὴ, as well as θέμιστες, ſignifies the Dodonian oracles.

Ἐκ δρυὸς ὑψικόμοιο Διὸς βουλὴν ἐπακουσαι.

Neither is it true (obſerves the ſcholiaſt upon Strabo) that θέμιστες never ſignifies oracles in Homer: for in the hymn to Apollo, (and Thucydides quotes that hymn as Homer's) the poet thus uſes it,

— — — ἀγγέλλουσι θέμιστας
Φοίβου Ἀπόλλωνος —

Strabo himſelf uſes θεμιστείαν in this ſenſe, lib. xvii and in the oracles that are yet extant, θεμιστεύειν frequently ſignifies *oracula reddere*: and in Ælian (continues the ſcholiaſt) lib. iii. chap. 43, 44. σὲ σὶ θεμιστεύσω, ſignifies *non tibi oracula reddam*; and Heſychius renders θέμιστες, by μαντεῖα, χρήσμοι, prophecy or oracles.

Then Medon, conſcious of their dire debates,
The murd'rous council to the queen relates.

v. 426. —— *Medon, conſcious of their dire debates.*] After this verſe Euſtathius recites one that is omitted in moſt of the late editions as ſpurious, at leaſt improper.

Αὐλῆς ἐκτὸς ἐων, οἱ δ' ἔνδοθι μῆτιν ὕφαινον.

That is, Medon was out of the court, whereas the ſuitors formed their council within it: the line is really to be ſuſpected; for a little above, Homer directly tells us, that the ſuitors left the palace.

Then iſſuing from the dome, before the gate,
With clouded looks, a pale aſſembly ſat.

It is likewiſe very evident that they ſtood in the open air, for they diſcover the ſhip returning from the ambuſh, and ſailing into the bay. How then can it be ſaid of the ſuitors, that they formed their aſſembly in the court, οἱ δ' ἔνδοθι μῆτιν ὕφαινον. Beſides, continues Dacier, they left the palace, and placed themſelves under the lofty wall of it.

Ἐκ δ' ἦλθον μεγάροιο, παρὲκ μέγα τοῖχον αὐλῆς.

How then is it poſſible to ſee the ſhip entering the port, when this wall muſt neceſſarily obſtruct the ſight: the two verſes therefore evidently contradict themſelves, and one of them muſt conſequently be rejected: ſhe would have the line read thus;

Αὐλῆς ἐνθὲς ἐων, οἱ δ' ἔκλυθι, &c.

But all the difficulty vaniſhes by taking αὐλὴ, as it is frequently uſed, to denote any place open to the air, and conſequently not the court, but the court-yard, and this is the proper ſignification of the word. Then Medon may ſtand on the outſide of the wall of the court-yard, Αὐλῆς ἐκτὸς and over-hear the debates of the ſuitors who

Touch'd at the dreadful ſtory ſhe deſcends:
Her haſty ſteps a damſel-train attends.
Full where the dome its ſhining valves expands,
Sudden before the rival pow'rs ſhe ſtands:
And veiling decent with a modeſt ſhade
Her cheek, indignant to Antinous ſaid:
O void of faith! of all bad men the worſt!
Renown'd for wiſdom, by th' abuſe accurs'd!
Miſtaking fame proclaims thy gen'rous mind!
Thy deeds denote thee of the baſeſt kind.
Wretch! to deſtroy a prince that friendſhip gives,
While in his gueſt his murd'rer he receives:
Nor dread ſuperior Jove, to whom belong
The cauſe of ſuppliants, and revenge of wrong.
Haſt thou forgot, (ingrateful as thou art)
Who ſav'd thy father with a friendly part?
Lawleſs he ravag'd with his martial pow'rs
The Taphyan pirates on Theſprotia's ſhores;
Enrag'd, his life, his treaſures they demand;
Ulyſſes ſav'd him from th' avenger's hand.

form their council within it, or ἐνδοθι μίτην ὕφαινον. And as for the wall intercepting the view of the ſuitors, this is merely conjecture; and it is more rational to imagine that the court-yard was open ſea-ward, that ſo beautiful a proſpect as the ocean might not be ſhut up from the palace of a king; or at leaſt, the palace might ſtand upon ſuch an eminence as to command the ocean.

v. 447. — — *From th' avenger's hand.*] This whole paſſage is thus underſtood by Euſtathius; By ἀνδρῶν ἀποδιόντας Homer means the Ithacans; and he likewiſe affirms that

And would'ſt thou evil for his good repay?
His bed diſhonour and his houſe betray?
Afflict his queen? and with a murd'rous hand
Deſtroy his heir?—but ceaſe, 'tis I command.
Far hence thoſe fears, (Eurymachus reply'd)
O prudent princeſs! bid thy ſoul confide.

the people who demanded vengeance of Ulyſſes were alſo the Ithacans. It is not here tranſlated in this ſenſe; the conſtruction rather requires it to be underſtood of the Theſprotians, who were allies of Ulyſſes, and by virtue of that alliance demanded Eupithes, the father of Antinous, out of the hands of Ulyſſes. But I ſubmit to the reader's judgment.

v. 449. *His bed diſhonour, and his houſe betray?*
Afflict his queen? &c.]

It is obſervable, that Penelope in the compaſs of two lines recites four heads of her complaint; ſuch contractions of thought and expreſſion being natural to perſons in anger, as Euſtathius obſerves; ſhe ſpeaks with heat, and conſequently ſtarts from thought to thought with precipitation. The whole ſpeech is animated with a generous reſentment, and ſhe concludes at once like a mother and a queen; like a mother, with affection for Telemachus; and like a queen with authority, παύεσθαι κέλομαι.

v. 452. (— — *Eurymachus reply'd.*] This whole diſcourſe of Eurymachus is to be underſtood by way of contrariety; there is an obvious and a latent interpretation; for inſtance, when he ſays,

His blood in vengeance ſmokes upon my ſpear;

it obviouſly means the blood of the perſon who offers violence to Telemachus; but it may likewiſe mean the blood

Breathes there a man who dares that hero ſlay,
While I behold the golden light of day?
No: by the righteous Pow'rs of heav'n I ſwear,
His blood in vengeance ſmokes upon my ſpear.
Ulyſſes, when my infant days I led,
With wine ſuffic'd me, and with dainties fed:
My gen'rous ſoul abhors th' ungrateful part,
And my friend's ſon lives deareſt to my heart.
Then fear no mortal arm; if Heav'n deſtroy,
We muſt reſign: for man is born to die.
Thus ſmooth he ended, yet his death conſpir'd:
Then ſorrowing, with ſad ſtep the queen retir'd,
With ſtreaming eyes all comfortleſs deplor'd,
Touch'd with the dear remembrance of her lord;

of Telemachus, and the conſtruction admits both interpretations: thus alſo when he ſays, that no perſon ſhall lay hands upon Telemachus, while he is alive, he means that he will do it himſelf: and laſtly, when he adds,

Then fear no mortal arm: if heav'n deſtroy,
We muſt reſign; for man is born to die.

the apparent ſignification is, that Telemachus has occaſion only to fear a natural death; but he means if the oracle of Jupiter commands them to deſtroy Telemachus, that then the ſuitors will take away his life. He alludes to the foregoing ſpeech of Amphinomus:

Conſult we firſt th' all-ſeeing Pow'rs above,
And the ſure oracles of righteous Jove.
If they aſſent, ev'n by this hand he dies;
If they forbid, I war not with the ſkies.

Euſtathius.

Nor ceas'd, till Pallas bid her ſorrows fly,
And in ſoft ſlumber ſeal'd her flowing eye.
And now Eumæus, at the ev'ning hour,
Came late returning to his ſilvan bow'r.
Ulyſſes and his ſon had dreſt with art
A yearly boar, and gave the Gods their part,
Holy repaſt! That inſtant from the ſkies
The martial Goddeſs to Ulyſſes flies:
She waves her golden wand, and reaſſumes
From ev'ry feature every grace that blooms;
At once his veſtures change; at once ſhe ſheds
Age o'er his limbs, that tremble as he treads.
Leſt to the queen the ſwain with tranſport fly,
Unable to contain th' unruly joy.
When near he drew, the prince breaks forth; proclaim
What tidings, friends? what ſpeaks the voice of fame?
Say, if the ſuitors meaſure back the main,
Or ſtill in ambuſh thirſt for blood in vain?
Whether, he cries, they meaſure back the flood,
Or ſtill in ambuſh thirſt in vain for blood,
Eſcap'd my care: where lawleſs ſuitors ſway,
Thy mandate born, my ſoul diſdain'd to ſtay.
But from th' Hermæan height I caſt a view,
Where to the port a bark high bounding flew;

v. 490. *From th' Hermæan height — —*] It would be ſuperfluous to tranſlate all the various interpretations of this paſſage; it will be ſufficiently intelligible to the reader,

Her freight a ſhining band: with martial air
Each pois'd his ſhield, and each advanc'd his ſpear:

if he looks upon it only to imply that there was an hill in Ithaca called the Hermæan hill, either becauſe there was a temple, ſtatue, or altar of Mercury upon it; and ſo called from that Deity.

It has been written that Mercury being the meſſenger of the Gods, in his frequent journeys cleared the roads, and when he found any ſtones he threw them in an heap out of the way, and theſe heaps were called ἑρμαια, or *mercuries*. The circumſtance of his clearing the roads is ſomewhat odd; but why might not Mercury as well as Trivia preſide over them, and have his images erected in publick ways, becauſe he was ſuppoſed to frequent them as the meſſenger of the Gods?

This book takes up no more time than the ſpace of the thirty-eighth day; for Telemachus reaches the lodge of Eumæus in the morning; a little after he diſpatches Eumæus to Penelope, who returns in the evening of the ſame day. The book in general is very beautiful in the original; the diſcovery of Ulyſſes to Telemachus is particularly tender and affecting: it has ſome reſemblance with that of Joſeph's diſcovery of himſelf to his brethren, and it may not perhaps be diſagreeable to ſee how two ſuch authors deſcribe the ſame paſſion,

I am Joſeph, I am your brother Joſeph.
I am Ulyſſes, I, my ſon! am he!
and he wept aloud, and he fell on his brother's neck and wept.
He wept abundant, and he wept aloud.

But it muſt be owned that Homer falls infinitely ſhort of Moſes: he muſt be a very wicked man, that can read the hiſtory of Joſeph without the utmoſt touches of compaſſion and tranſport. There is a majeſtick ſimplicity in

And if aright theſe ſearching eyes ſurvey,
Th' eluded ſuitors ſtem the wat'ry way.
The prince, well pleas'd to diſappoint their wiles,
Steals on his ſire a glance, and ſecret ſmiles.
And now a ſhort repaſt prepar'd, they feed,
'Till the keen rage of craving hunger fled:
Then to repoſe withdrawn, apart they lay,
And in ſoft ſleep forgot the cares of day.

the whole relation, and ſuch an affecting portrait of human nature, that it overwhelms us with viciſſitudes of joy and ſorrow. This is a pregnant inſtance how much the beſt of heathen writers is inferiour to the divine hiſtorian upon a parallel ſubject, where the two authors endeavour to move the ſofter paſſions. The ſame may with equal truth be ſaid in reſpect to ſublimity; not only in the inſtance produced by Longinus, viz. *Let there be light, and there was light. Let the earth be made, and the earth was made:* but in general, in the more elevated parts of Scripture, and particularly the whole book of Job; which, with regard both to ſublimity of thought, and morality, exceeds beyond all compariſon the moſt noble parts of Homer.

THE SEVENTEENTH BOOK OF THE ODYSSEY.

THE ARGUMENT.

TELEMACHUS returning to the city, relates to Penelope the ſum of his travels. Ulyſſes is conducted by Eumæus to the palace, where his old dog Argus acknowledges his maſter, after an abſence of twenty years, and dies with joy. Eumæus returns into the country, and Ulyſſes remains among the ſuitors, whoſe behaviour is deſcribed.

THE

SEVENTEENTH BOOK

OF THE

ODYSSEY.

SOON as Aurora, daughter of the dawn,
Sprinkled with roſeate light the dewy lawn;
In haſte the prince aroſe, prepar'd to part;
His hand impatient graſps the pointed dart;
Fair on his feet the poliſh'd ſandals ſhine,
And thus he greets the maſter of the ſwine.
My friend adieu; let this ſhort ſtay ſuffice;
I haſte to meet my mother's longing eyes,
And end her tears, her ſorrows, and her ſighs.

v. 8. *I haſte to meet my mother's longing eyes.*] There are two reaſons for the return of Telemachus: one, the duty a ſon owes to a mother; the other, to find an opportunity to put in execution the deſigns concerted with Ulyſſes: the poet therefore ſhifts the ſcene from the lodge to the palace. Telemachus takes not Ulyſſes along with him, for fear he ſhould raiſe ſuſpicion in the ſuitors, that a perſon in a beggar's garb has ſome ſecret merit, to obtain the familiarity of a king's ſon, and this might be an

But thou attentive, what we order heed;
This hapleſs ſtranger to the city lead;
By publick bounty let him there be fed,
And bleſs the hand that ſtretches forth the bread.
To wipe the tears from all afflicted eyes,
My will may covet, but my pow'r denies.

occaſion of a diſcovery; whereas when Ulyſſes afterwards appears amongſt the ſuitors, he is thought to be an entire ſtranger to Telemachus, which prevents all jealouſy and gives them an opportunity to carry on their meaſures, without any particular obſervation. Beſides, Eumæus is ſtill to be kept in ignorance concerning the perſon of Ulyſſes; Telemachus therefore gives him a plauſible reaſon for his return; namely, that his mother may no longer be in pain for his ſafety: this likewiſe excellently contributes to deceive Eumæus. Now as the preſence of Ulyſſes in the palace is abſolutely neceſſary to bring about the ſuitors deſtruction, Telemachus orders Eumæus to conduct him thither, and by this method he comes as the friend and gueſt of Eumæus, not of Telemachus: moreover, this injunction was neceſſary: Eumæus was a perſon of ſuch generoſity, that he would have thought himſelf obliged to detain his gueſt under his own care and inſpection: nay, before he guides him towards the palace, in the ſequel of this book, he tells Ulyſſes he does it ſolely in compliance with the order of Telemachus, and acts contrary to his own inclinations.

v. 14. *To wipe the tears from all afflicted eyes,*
My will may covet, but my pow'r denies.]

This might appear too free a declaration, if Telemachus had made it before he knew Ulyſſes; for no circumſtance could juſtify him for uſing any diſregard toward the poor and ſtranger, according to the ſtrict notions, and the ſanctity of the laws of hoſpitality amongſt

If this raiſe anger in the ſtranger's thought,
The pain of anger puniſhes the fault:
The very truth I undiſguis'd declare;
For what ſo eaſy as to be ſincere?
To this Ulyſſes. What the prince requires
Of ſwift removal, ſeconds my deſires.
To want like mine the peopled town can yield
More hopes of comfort than the lonely field.
Nor fits my age to till the labour'd lands,
Or ſtoop to taſks a rural lord demands.
Adieu! but ſince this ragged garb can bear
So ill, th' inclemencies of morning air,
A few hours ſpace permit me here to ſtay;
My ſteps Eumæus ſhall to town convey;
With riper beams when Phœbus warms the day.
Thus he: nor ought Telemachus reply'd,
But left the manſion with a lofty ſtride:
Schemes of revenge his pond'ring breaſt elate,
Revolving deep the ſuitors ſudden fate.
Arriving now before th' imperial hall;
He props his ſpear againſt the pillar'd wall;

the antients: but as the caſe ſtands, we are not in the leaſt ſhocked at the words of Telemachus; we know the reaſon why he thus ſpeaks; it is to conceal Ulyſſes. He is ſo far from ſhewing any particular regard to him, that he treats him with a ſeverity in ſome degree contrary to the laws of hoſpitality; by adding, that if he complains of this hard uſage, the complaint will not redreſs but increaſe his calamity.

Then like a lion o'er the threſhold bounds;
The marble pavement with his ſtep reſounds;
His eye firſt glanc'd where Euryclea ſpreads
With furry ſpoils of beaſts the ſplendid beds:
She ſaw, ſhe wept, ſhe ran with eager pace,
And reach'd her maſter with a long embrace.
All crowded round the family appears
With wild entrancement, and eſtatick tears.
Swift from above deſcends the royal fair;
(Her beauteous cheeks the bluſh of Venus wear,
Chaſten'd with coy Diana's penſive air)

v. 46. (*Her beauteous cheeks the bluſh of Venus wear, Chaſten'd with coy Diana's penſive air*)]

This deſcription preſents us with a noble idea of the beauty and chaſtity of Penelope; her *perſon reſembles Venus, but Venus with the modeſt air of Diana.* Dionyſius Halicarn. takes notice of the beauty and ſoftneſs of theſe two verſes.

Ἡ δ' ἴεν ἐκ θαλάμοιο περίφρων Πηνελόπεια
Ἀρτέμιδι ἰκέλη, ἠ δὲ χρυσῇ Ἀφροδίτῃ.

When Homer (remarks that author) paints a beautiful face, or an engaging object, he chuſes the ſofteſt vowels, and moſt ſmooth and flowing ſemivowels: he never clogs the pronunciation with rough ſounds, and a colliſion of untunable conſonants, but every ſyllable, every letter conſpires to exhibit the beauty of the object he endeavours to repreſent: there are no leſs than three and thirty vowels in two lines, and no more than twenty-nine conſonants, which makes the verſes flow away with an agreeable ſmoothneſs and harmony.

Hangs o'er her ſon; in his embraces dies;
Rains kiſſes on his neck, his face, his eyes:
Few words ſhe ſpoke, tho' much ſhe had to ſay,
And ſcarce thoſe few, for tears, could force their way.
Light of my eyes! he comes! unhop'd-for joy!
Has Heav'n from Pylos brought my lovely boy?
So ſnatch'd from all our cares!—Tell, haſt thou known
Thy father's fate, and tell me all thy own.
Oh deareſt, moſt rever'd of womankind!
Ceaſe with thoſe tears to melt a manly mind,
(Reply'd the prince) nor be our fates deplor'd,
From death and treaſon to thy arms reſtor'd.
Go bathe, and rob'd in white, aſcend the tow'rs;
With all thy handmaids thank th' immortal Pow'rs;

Penelope, we ſee, embraces her ſon with the utmoſt affection: *kiſſing the lip* was not in faſhion in the days of Homer; *No one* (remarks the biſhop) *ever kiſſes the lip or mouth.* Penelope here kiſſes her ſon's eyes, and his head; that is, his cheek, or perhaps forehead; and Eumæus, in the preceding book, embraces the hands, eyes, and head of Telemachus. But for the comfort of the ladies, I rejoice to obſerve that all theſe were ceremonious kiſſes from a mother to a ſon, or from an inferiour to a ſuperiour: this therefore is no argument that lovers thus embraced, nor ought it to be brought as a reaſon why the preſent manner of ſalutation ſhould be abrogated. Madam Dacier has been ſo tender as to keep it a ſecret from the men, that there ever was a time in which the modern method of kiſſing was not in faſhion: ſhe highly deſerves their thanks and gratitude for it.

To ev'ry God vow hecatombs to bleed,
And call Jove's vengeance on their guilty deed.
While to th' aſſembled council I repair;
A ſtranger ſent by Heav'n attends me there;
My new accepted gueſt I haſte to find,
Now to Piræus' honour'd charge conſign'd.
The matron heard, nor was his word in vain.
She bath'd; and rob'd in white, with all her train,
To every God vow'd hecatombs to bleed,
And call'd Jove's vengeance on the guilty deed.
Arm'd with his lance the prince then paſs'd the gate;
Two dogs behind, a faithful guard, await;

v. 65. *A ſtranger ſent by Heav'n attends me there.*] There is a vein of ſincere piety that runs through the words and actions of Telemachus: he has no ſooner delivered his mother from her uneaſy apprehenſions concerning his ſafety, but he proceeds to another act of virtue toward Theoclymenus, whom he had taken into his protection: he performs his duty towards men and towards the Gods. It is by his direction that Penelope offers up her devotions for ſucceſs, and thanks for his return. It is he who preſcribes the manner of it; namely, by waſhing the hands, in token of the purity of mind required by thoſe who ſupplicate the Deities; and by putting on clean garments, to ſhew the reverence and regard with which their ſouls ought to be poſſeſt when they appear before the Gods. I am not ſenſible that the laſt ceremony is often mentioned in other parts of Homer; yet I doubt not but it was practiſed upon all religious ſolemnities. The moral of the whole is, that piety is a ſure way to victory: Telemachus appears every where a good man, and for this reaſon he becomes at laſt an happy one; and his calamities contribute to his glory.

Pallas his form with grace divine improves:
The gazing croud admires him as he moves:
Him, gath'ring round, the haughty ſuitors greet
With ſemblance fair, but inward deep deceit.
Their falſe addreſſes gen'rous he deny'd,
Paſt on, and ſat by faithful Mentor's ſide;
With Antiphus, and Halitherſes ſage,
(His father's counſellours, rever'd for age.)
Of his own fortunes, and Ulyſſes' fame,
Much aſk'd the ſeniors; 'till Piræus came.
The ſtranger-gueſt purſu'd him cloſe behind;
Whom when Telemachus beheld, he join'd.
He, (when Piræus aſk'd for ſlaves to bring
The gifts and treaſures of the Spartan king)
Thus thoughtful anſwer'd: Thoſe we ſhall not move,
Dark and unconſcious of the will of Jove:
We know not yet the full event of all:
Stabb'd in his palace if your prince muſt fall,
Us, and our houſe if treaſon muſt o'erthrow,
Better a friend poſſeſs them, than a foe;
If death to theſe, and vengeance Heav'n decree,
Riches are welcome then, not elſe, to me.
'Till then, retain the gifts.—The hero ſaid,
And in his hand the willing ſtranger led.
Then diſ-array'd, the ſhining bath they ſought,
(With unguents ſmooth) of poliſht marble wrought:
Obedient handmaids with aſſiſtant toil
Supply the limpid wave, and fragrant oil:

Then o'er their limbs refulgent robes they threw,
And freſh from bathing to their ſeats withdrew.
The golden ew'r a nymph attendant brings,
Repleniſh'd from the pure tranſlucent ſprings;
With copious ſtreams that golden ew'r ſupplies
A ſilver laver of capacious ſize.
They waſh: the table, in fair order ſpread,
Is pil'd with viands and the ſtrength of bread.
Full oppoſite, before the folding gate,
The penſive mother ſits in humble ſtate;
Lowly ſhe ſat, and with dejected view
The fleecy threads her ivory fingers drew.

v. 117. *Say, to my mournful couch*, &c.] Penelope had requeſted Telemachus to give her an account of his voyage to Pyle, and of what he had heard concerning Ulyſſes. He there waved the diſcourſe, becauſe the queen was in publick with her female attendants: by this conduct the poet ſuſtains both their characters; Penelope is impatient to hear of Ulyſſes; and this agrees with the affection of a tender wife; but the diſcovery being unſeaſonable, Telemachus forbears to ſatisfy her curioſity; in which he acts like a wiſe man. Here, (obſerves Euſtathius) ſhe gently reproaches him for not ſatisfying her impatience concerning her huſband; ſhe inſinuates that it is a piece of cruelty to permit her ſtill to grieve, when it is in his power to give her comfort; and this induces him to gratify her deſires. It ought to be obſerved, that Homer chuſes a proper time for this relation; it was neceſſary that the ſuitors ſhould be ignorant of the ſtory of Ulyſſes; Telemachus therefore makes it when they are withdrawn to their ſports, and when none were preſent but friends

The prince and ſtranger ſhar'd the genial feaſt,
'Till now the rage of thirſt and hunger ceaſt.
When thus the queen. My ſon! my only friend!
Say, to my mournful couch ſhall I aſcend?
(The couch deſerted now a length of years;
The couch for ever water'd with my tears)
Say wilt thou not (ere yet the ſuitor-crew
Return, and riot ſhakes our walls anew)
Say wilt thou not the leaſt account afford?
The leaſt glad tidings of my abſent lord?
To her the youth. We reach'd the Pylian plains,
Where Neſtor, ſhepherd of his people, reigns.
All arts of tenderneſs to him are known,
Kind to Ulyſſes' race as to his own;
No father with a fonder graſp of joy,
Strains to his boſom his long-abſent boy.
But all unknown, if yet Ulyſſes breathe,
Or glide a ſpectre in the realms beneath;

v. 134. *There Argive Helen I beheld, whoſe charms, (So Heav'n decreed)* &c.]

Euſtathius takes notice of the candid behaviour of Telemachus, with reſpect to Helen: ſhe had received him courteouſly, and he teſtifies his gratitude, by aſcribing the calamities ſhe drew upon her country to the decree of Heaven, not to her immodeſty: this is particularly decent in the mouth of Telemachus, becauſe he is now acquainted with his father's return; otherwiſe he could not have mentioned her name but to her diſhonour, who had been the occaſion of his death.

For further ſearch, his rapid ſteeds tranſport
My lengthen'd journey to the Spartan court.
There Argive Helen I beheld, whoſe charms
(So Heav'n decreed) engag'd the great in arms.
My cauſe of coming told, he thus rejoin'd;
And ſtill his words live perfect in my mind.

Heav'ns! would a ſoft, inglorious, daſtard train
An abſent hero's nuptial joys profane!
So with her young, amid the woodland ſhades,
A tim'rous hind the lion's court invades,
Leaves in that fatal lair her tender fawns,
And climbs the cliff, or feeds along the lawns;
Meantime returning, with remorſeleſs ſway
The monarch ſavage rends the panting prey:
With equal fury, and with equal fame,
Shall great Ulyſſes re-aſſert his claim.
O Jove! Supreme! whom men and Gods revere;
And thou whoſe luſtre gilds the rolling ſphere!

v. 138. *Heav'ns! would a ſoft, inglorious, daſtard train* &c.] Theſe verſes are repeated from the fourth Odyſſey; and are not without a good effect; they cannot fail of comforting Penelope, by aſſuring her that Ulyſſes is alive, and reſtrained by Calypſo involuntarily; they give her hopes of his return, and the ſatisfaction of hearing his glory from the mouth of Menelaus. The conciſeneſs of Telemachus is likewiſe remarkable; he recapitulates in thirty-eight lines the ſubject of almoſt three books, the third, the fourth, and fifth: he ſelects every circumſtance that can pleaſe Penelope, and drops thoſe that would give her pain.

With pow'r congenial join'd, propitious aid
The chief adopted by the martial Maid!
Such to our wiſh the warriour ſoon reſtore,
As when, contending on the Leſbian ſhore,
His proweſs Philomelides confeſt,
And loud acclaiming Greeks the victor bleſt:
Then ſoon th' invaders of his bed, and throne,
Their love preſumptuous ſhall by death atone.
Now what you queſtion of my antient friend,
With truth I anſwer; thou the truth attend.
Learn what I heard the * ſea-born ſeer relate,
Whoſe eye can pierce the dark receſs of fate.
Sole in an iſle, impriſon'd by the main,
The ſad ſurvivor of his num'rous train,
Ulyſſes lies; detain'd by magick charms,
And preſt unwilling in Calypſo's arms.
No ſailors there, no veſſels to convey,
Nor oars to cut th' immeaſurable way——
This told Atrides, and he told no more.
Thence ſafe I voyag'd to my native ſhore.
He ceas'd; nor made the penſive queen reply,
But droop'd her head, and drew a ſecret ſigh.
When Theoclymenus the ſeer began:
Oh ſuff'ring conſort of the ſuff'ring man!

v. 172. *When Theoclymenus the ſeer began:* &c.] It is with great judgment that the poet here introduces Theoclymenus; he is a perſon that has no direct relation to the ſtory of the Odyſſey, yet becauſe he appears accidentally in it, Homer unites him very artificially with it, that

* Proteus

What human knowledge could, thoſe kings might tell;
But I the ſecrets of high Heav'n reveal.
Before the firſt of Gods be this declar'd,
Before the board whoſe bleſſings we have ſhar'd;
Witneſs the genial rites, and witneſs all
This houſe holds ſacred in her ample wall!

he may not appear to no purpoſe, and as an uſeleſs ornament. He here ſpeaks as an augur, and what he utters contributes to the perſeverance of Penelope in reſiſting the addreſſes of the ſuitors, by aſſuring her of the return of Ulyſſes; and conſequently in ſome degree Theoclymenus promotes the principal action. But it may be ſaid, if it was neceſſary that Penelope ſhould be informed of his return, why does not Telemachus aſſure her of it, who was fully acquainted with the truth? The anſwer is, that Penelope is not to be fully informed, but only encouraged by a general hope: Theoclymenus ſpeaks from his art, which may poſſibly be liable to errour: but Telemachus muſt have ſpoken from knowledge, which would have been contrary to the injunctions of Ulyſſes, and might have proved fatal by an unſeaſonable diſcovery: it was therefore judicious in the poet to put the aſſurance of the return of Ulyſſes into the mouth of Theoclymenus, and not of Telemachus.

There is an expreſſion in this ſpeech, which in the Greek is remarkable: literally it is to be rendered, *Ulyſſes is now ſitting or creeping in Ithaca*, ἥμενος ἢ ἕρπων; that is, Ulyſſes is returned and concealed: it is taken from the poſture of a perſon in the act of endeavouring to hide himſelf: he ſits down or creeps upon the ground. Euſtathius explains it by κρύφα, ἢ ὡς κατ' ἐρθὸν βαδίζων.

Ev'n now this inſtant, great Ulyſſes lay'd
At reſt, or wand'ring in his country's ſhade,
Their guilty deeds, in hearing, and in view
Secret revolves; and plans the vengeance due.
Of this ſure auguries the Gods beſtow'd,
When firſt our veſſel anchor'd in your road.

Succeed thoſe omens, Heav'n! (the queen rejoin'd)
So ſhall our bounties ſpeak a grateful mind;
And ev'ry envy'd happineſs attend
The man, who calls Penelope his friend.

Thus commun'd they: while in the marble court
(Scene of their inſolence) the lords reſort;
Athwart the ſpacious ſquare each tries his art
To whirl the diſk, or aim the miſſile dart.

v. 192. — — — *each tries his art*
To whirl the diſk, or aim the miſſile dart.]

Euſtathius remarks that though the ſuitors were abandoned to luxury, vice, and intemperance, yet they exerciſe themſelves in laudable ſports: they toſs the quoit, and throw the javelin, which are both heroick diverſions, and form the body into ſtrength and activity. This is owing to the virtue of the age, not the perſons: ſuch ſports were faſhionable, and therefore uſed by the ſuitors, and not becauſe they were heroick. However they may inſtruct us never to give ourſelves up to idleneſs and inaction; but to make our very diverſions ſubſervient to nobler views, and turn a pleaſure into a virtue.

Now did the hour of ſweet repaſt arrive,
And from the field the victim flocks they drive:
Medon the herald (one who pleas'd them beſt,
And honour'd with a portion of their feaſt)
To bid the banquet, interrupts their play.
Swift to the hall they haſte; aſide they lay
Their garments, and ſuccinct, the victims ſlay.
Then ſheep and goats, and briſtly porkers bled,
And the proud ſteer was o'er the marble ſpread.
While thus the copious banquet they provide;
Along the road converſing ſide by ſide,
Proceed Ulyſſes and the faithful ſwain:
When thus Eumæus, gen'rous and humane.
To town, obſervant of our lord's beheſt,
Now let us ſpeed; my friend, no more my gueſt!

v. 196. *Medon the herald (one who pleas'd them beſt.*] We may obſerve that the character of Medon is very particular; he is at the ſame time a favourite of the ſuitors, and Telemachus, perſons entirely oppoſite in their intereſt. It ſeldom happens any man can pleaſe two parties, without acting an inſincere part: Atticus was indeed equally acceptable to the two factions of Cæſar and Pompey, but it was becauſe he ſeemed neutral, and acted as if they were both his friends; or rather he was a man of ſuch eminent virtues, that they eſteemed it an honour to have him thought their friend. Homer every where repreſents Medon as a perſon of integrity; he is artful, but not criminal: no doubt but he made all compliances, that conſiſted with probity, with the ſuitors diſpoſitions; by this method he ſaved Penelope more effectually than if he had ſhewed a more rigid virtue. He made himſelf

Yet like myſelf I wiſh'd thee here preferr'd,
Guard of the flock, or keeper of the herd.
But much to raiſe my maſter's wrath I fear;
The wrath of princes ever is ſevere.
Then heed his will, and be our journey made
While the broad beams of Phœbus are diſplay'd,
Or ere brown ev'ning ſpreads her chilly ſhade.

maſter of their hearts by an inſinuating behaviour, and was a ſpy upon their actions. Euſtathius compares him to a buſkin that fits both legs, οἷον τις κόθορνος; he ſeems to have been an Anti-Cato, and practiſed a virtuous gaiety.

v. 210. *Guard of the flock, or keeper of the herd.*] Such little traits as theſe are very delightful; for the reader knowing that the perſon to whom this offer is made, is Ulyſſes, cannot fail of being diverted to ſee the honeſt and loyal Eumæus promiſing to make his maſter and king the keeper of his herds or ſtalls, σταθμῶν; and this is offered as a piece of good fortune or dignity.

v. 215. — — — *ere ev'ning ſpreads her chilly ſhade.*] Euſtathius gathers from theſe words, that the time of the action of the Odyſſey was in the end of autumn, or beginning of winter, when the mornings and evenings are cold: thus Ulyſſes, in the beginning of this book, makes the coldneſs of the morning an excuſe for not going with Telemachus: his rags being but an ill defence againſt it: and here Eumæus mentions the coldneſs of the evening, as a reaſon why they ſhould begin their journey in the heat of the day; ſo that it was now probably about ten of the clock, and they arrive at Ithaca at noon: from hence we may conjecture, that the lodge of Eumæus was five or ſix miles from the city: that is, about a two hours walk.

Juſt thy advice, (the prudent chief rejoin'd)
And ſuch as ſuits the dictate of my mind.
Lead on: but help me to ſome ſtaff to ſtay
My feeble ſtep, ſince rugged is the way.
Acroſs his ſhoulders, then the ſcrip he flung,
Wide-patch'd, and faſten'd by a twiſted thong.
A ſtaff Eumæus gave. Along the way
Cheerly they fare: behind, the keepers ſtay;
Theſe with their watchful dogs (a conſtant guard)
Supply his abſence, and attend the herd.
And now his city ſtrikes the monarch's eyes,
Alas! how chang'd! a man of miſeries;

v. 224. *Theſe, with their watchful dogs — —*] It is certain that if theſe little particulars had been omitted, there would have been no chaſm in the connexion; why then does Homer inſert ſuch circumſtances unneceſſarily, which it muſt be allowed are of no importance, and add nothing to the perfection of the ſtory? nay, they are ſuch as may be thought trivial, and unworthy the dignity of epick poetry. But, as Dacier very well obſerves, they are a kind of painting: were a painter to draw this ſubject, he would undoubtedly inſert into the piece theſe herdſmen and dogs after the manner of Homer; they are natural ornaments, and conſequently are no diſgrace either to the poet or the painter.

It is obſervable that Homer gives us an exact draught of the country: he ſets before us as in a picture, the city, the circular grove of poplars adjacent, the fountain falling from a rock, and the altar ſacred to the Nymphs, erected on the point of it. We are as it were tranſported into Ithaca, and travel with Ulyſſes and Eumæus: Homer verifies the obſervation of Horace above all poets; namely, that poetry is painting.

Propt on a ſtaff, a beggar old and bare,
In rags diſhoneſt flutt'ring with the air!
Now paſs'd the rugged road, they journey down
The cavern'd way deſcending to the town,
Where, from the rock, with liquid lapſe diſtills
A limpid fount; that ſpread in parting rills
Its current thence to ſerve the city brings:
An uſeful work! adorn'd by antient kings.
Neritus, Ithacus, Polyctor there
In ſculptur'd ſtone immortaliz'd their care,
In marble urns receiv'd it from above,
And ſhaded with a green ſurrounding grove;
Where ſilver alders, in high arches twin'd,
Drink the cold ſtream, and tremble to the wind.
Beneath, ſequeſter'd to the Nymphs, is ſeen
A moſſy altar, deep embower'd in green;
Where conſtant vows by travellers are paid,
And holy horrours ſolemnize the ſhade.
Here with his goats, (not vow'd to ſacred flame,
But pamper'd luxury) Melanthius came:

v. 236. *Neritus, Ithacus, Polyctor* — —] Publick benefactions demand publick honours and acknowledgments; for this reaſon Homer makes an honourable mention of theſe three brothers. Ithaca was a ſmall iſland, and deſtitute of plenty of freſh water; this fountain therefore was a publick good to the whole region about it; and has given immortality to the authors of it. They were the ſons of Pterelaus (as Euſtathius informs us); Ithacus gave name to the country, Neritus to a mountain, and Polyctor to a place called Polyctorium.

Two grooms attend him. With an envious look
He ey'd the ſtranger, and imperious ſpoke.
The good old proverb how this pair fulfil!
One rogue is uſher to another ſtill.
Heav'n with a ſecret principle indu'd
Mankind, to ſeek their own ſimilitude.
Where goes the ſwine-herd with that ill-look'd gueſt?
That giant-glutton, dreadful at a feaſt!
Full many a poſt have thoſe broad ſhoulders worn,
From ev'ry great man's gate repuls'd with ſcorn;
To no brave prize aſpir'd the worthleſs ſwain,
'Twas but for ſcraps he aſk'd, and aſk'd in vain.

v. 258. *To no brave prize aſpir'd the worthleſs ſwain,*
'Twas but for ſcraps he aſk'd, and aſk'd in vain.]

Dacier is very ſingular in her interpretation of this paſſage: ſhe imagines it has a reference to the games practiſed amongſt the ſuitors, and to the rewards of the victors, which were uſually tripods and beautiful captives. "Thinkeſt thou (ſays Melanthius) that this beggar will "obtain the victory in our ſports, and that they will give "him as the reward of his valour ſome beautiful ſlave, or "ſome precious tripod?" But in Homer there is nothing that gives the leaſt countenance to this explication: he thus literally ſpeaks: this fellow *by going from door to door will meet with correction, while he begs meanly for a few ſcraps, not for things of price, ſuch as a captive or tripod.* Euſtathius explains it as ſpoken in contempt of Ulyſſes; that he appears to be ſuch a vile perſon, as to have no ambition or hope to expect any thing better than a few ſcraps, nor to aſpire to the rewards of nobler ſtrangers, ſuch as captives or tripods. Αικλοι, ſays the ſame author,

To beg, than work, he better underſtands ;
Or we perhaps might take him off thy hands.
For any office could the ſlave be good,
To cleanſe the fold, or help the kids to food,

are the minuteſt crumbs of bread, Ϛμικρότατοι ψωμοὶ. I am perſuaded, that the reader will ſubſcribe to the judgment of Euſtathius, if he conſiders the conſtruction, and that ἄρξας and λίζηται are govern'd by αἰτίζειν as effectually as ἀκόλους, and therefore muſt refer to the ſame act of begging, not of claiming by victory in the games: αἰτίζων is not a word that can here expreſs a reward, but only a charity: beſides, would it not be abſurd to ſay that a beggar goes from door to door aſking alms, and not rewards beſtowed upon victors in publick exerciſes? the words πολλῆσι φλιῆσι, make the ſenſe general, they denote the life of a beggar, which is to go from door to door, and conſequently they ought not to be confined ſolely to the ſuitors; and if not, they can have no reference to any games, or to any rewards beſtowed upon ſuch occaſions. Beſides, it is ſcarce to be conceived that Melanthius could think this beggar capable of being admitted into the company, much leſs into the diverſion of the ſuitors, who were all perſons of high birth and ſtation. It is true, lib. xxi. Ulyſſes is permitted to try the bow, but this is through the peculiar grace of Telemachus, who knew the beggar to be Ulyſſes; and entirely contrary to their injunctions.

From this paſſage we may correct an errour in Heſychius: ἄορες (ſays he) are γυναῖκες ἢ τρίποδες: the ſentence is evidently maimed, for Heſychius undoubtedly thus wrote it, ἄορες γυναῖκες; λέγονται, for thus (adds he) Homer uſes it:

— — — οὐκ ἄορας οὐδὲ λίζηται.

That is (ſays Heſychius) ἢ γυναῖκας, οὐδὲ τρίποδας, referring to this verſe of the Odyſſey.

If any labour thoſe big joints could learn;
Some whey, to waſh his bowels, he might earn.
To cringe, to whine, his idle hands to ſpread,
Is all, by which that graceleſs maw is fed.
Yet hear me! if thy impudence but dare
Approach yon' walls, I propheſy thy fare:
Dearly, full dearly ſhalt thou buy thy bread
With many a footſtool thund'ring at thy head.
He thus: nor inſolent of word alone,
Spurn'd with his ruſtick heel his king unknown;
Spurn'd, but not mov'd: he, like a pillar ſtood,
Nor ſtirr'd an inch, contemptuous, from the road:
Doubtful, or with his ſtaff to ſtrike him dead,
Or greet the pavement with his worthleſs head.
Short was that doubt; to quell his rage inur'd,
The hero ſtood ſelf-conquer'd, and endur'd.

v. 279. *The hero ſtood ſelf-conquer'd, and endur'd.*] Homer excellently ſuſtains the character of Ulyſſes; he is a man of patience, and maſter of all his paſſions; he is here miſuſed by one of his own ſervants, yet is ſo far from returning the injury, that he ſtifles the ſenſe of it, without ſpeaking one word: it is true he is deſcribed as having a conflict in his ſoul; but this is no derogation to his character: not to feel like a man is inſenſibility, not virtue; but to repreſs the motions of the heart, and keep them within the bounds of moderation, this argues wiſdom, and turns an injury into a virtue and glory. There is an excellent contraſt between the benevolent Eumæus and the inſolent Melanthius. Eumæus reſents the outrage of Melanthius more than Ulyſſes; he is moved with indignation, but how does he expreſs it? not by railing, but by an appeal to Heaven in a prayer: a conduct worthy

But hateful of the wretch, Eumæus heav'd
His hands obteſting, and this pray'r conceiv'd.
Daughters of Jove! who from th' ætherial bow'rs
Deſcend to ſwell the ſprings, and feed the flow'rs!
Nymphs of this fountain! to whoſe ſacred names
Our rural victims mount in blazing flames!
To whom Ulyſſes' piety preferr'd
The yearly firſtlings of his flock, and herd;
Succeed my wiſh; your votary reſtore:
Oh be ſome God his convoy to our ſhore!
Due pains ſhall puniſh then this ſlave's offence,
And humble all his airs of inſolence,
Who proudly ſtalking, leaves the herds at large,
Commences courtier, and neglects his charge.
What mutters he? (Melanthius ſharp rejoins)
This crafty miſcreant big with dark deſigns?
The day ſhall come; nay, 'tis already near,
When, ſlave! to ſell thee at a price too dear,
Muſt be my care; and hence tranſport thee o'er,
(A load and ſcandal to this happy ſhore.)

to be imitated in more enlightened ages. The word ἀγλαΐας here bears a peculiar ſignification; it does not imply voluptuouſneſs as uſually, but pride, and means that Ulyſſes would ſpoil his haughty airs, if he ſhould ever return: this interpretation agrees with what follows, where Eumæus reproaches him for deſpiſing his rural charge, and aſpiring to politeneſs, or, as we expreſs it, to be a man of the town.

Oh! that as ſurely great Apollo's dart,
Or ſome brave ſuitor's ſword, might pierce the heart
Of the proud ſon; as that we ſtand this hour
In laſting ſafety from the father's pow'r.

So ſpoke the wretch, but ſhunning farther fray,
Turn'd his proud ſtep, and left them on their way.
Straight to the feaſtful palace he repair'd,
Familiar enter'd, and the banquet ſhar'd;
Beneath Eurymachus, his patron lord,
He took his place, and plenty heap'd the board.

Meantime they heard, ſoft-circling in the ſky,
Sweet airs aſcend, and heav'nly minſtrelſie;
(For Phemius to the lyre attun'd the ſtrain:)
Ulyſſes hearken'd, then addreſt the ſwain.

Well may this palace admiration claim,
Great, and reſpondent to the maſter's fame!

v. 308. *Beneath Eurymachus —— He took his place,——*] We may gather from hence the truth of an obſervation formerly made, That Melanthius, Eumæus, &c. were perſons of diſtinction, and their offices poſts of honour: we ſee Melanthius, who had the charge of the goats of Ulyſſes, is a companion for princes.

The reaſon why Melanthius in particular aſſociates himſelf with Eurymachus is, an intrigue which that prince holds with Melantho his ſiſter, as appears from the following book. There is a confederacy and league between them, and we find they all ſuffer condign puniſhment in the end of the Odyſſey.

Stage above ſtage th' imperial ſtructure ſtands,
Holds the chief honours, and the town commands:
High walls and battlements the courts incloſe,
And the ſtrong gates defy an hoſt of foes.
Far other cares its dwellers now employ:
The throng'd aſſembly, and the feaſt of joy:
I ſee the ſmokes of ſacrifice aſpire,
And hear (what graces ev'ry feaſt) the lyre.
Then thus Eumæus. Judge we which were beſt;
Amidſt yon' revellers a ſudden gueſt
Chuſe you to mingle, while behind I ſtay?
Or I firſt ent'ring introduce the way?
Wait for a ſpace without, but wait not long;
This is the houſe of violence and wrong:
Some rude inſult thy rev'rend age may bear;
For like their lawleſs lords the ſervants are.

v. 318. *High walls and battlements*, &c] We have here a very particular draught or plan of the palace of Ulyſſes; it is a kind of caſtle, at once deſigned for ſtrength and magnificence: this we may gather from ὑπερεπλίσσαιτο, which Heſychius explains by ὑπερπηδῆσαι, ὑπερβῆναι, not eaſily to be ſurmounted, or forced by arms.

Homer artfully introduces Ulyſſes ſtruck with wonder at the beauty of the palace; this is done to confirm Eumæus in the opinion that Ulyſſes is really the beggar he appears to be, and a perfect ſtranger among the Ithacans: thus alſo when he complains of hunger, he ſpeaks the language of a beggar, as Euſtathius remarks, to perſuade Eumæus that he takes his journey to the court, ſolely out of want and hunger.

Juſt is, oh friend! thy caution, and addreſt
(Reply'd the chief) to no unheedful breaſt;
The wrongs and injuries of baſe mankind
Freſh to my ſenſe, and always in my mind.
The bravely-patient to no fortune yields:
On rolling oceans, and in fighting fields,
Storms have I paſt, and many a ſtern debate;
And now in humbler ſcene ſubmit to Fate.
What cannot Want? the beſt ſhe will expoſe,
And I am learn'd in all her train of woes;
She fills with navies, hoſts, and loud alarms
The ſea, the land, and ſhakes the world with arms!
Thus, near the gates conferring as they drew,
Argus, the dog his antient maſter knew;

v. 345. *Argus, the dog his antient maſter knew*, &c.] This whole epiſode has fallen under the ridicule of the criticks; Monſ. Perault's in particular: "The dunghill before the palace (ſays that author) is more proper for a peaſant than a king; and it is beneath the dignity of poetry to deſcribe the dog Argus almoſt devoured with vermin." It muſt be allowed that ſuch a familiar epiſode could not have been properly introduced into the Iliad: it is writ in a nobler ſtyle, and diſtinguiſhed by a boldneſs of ſentiments and diction; whereas the Odyſſey deſcends to the familiar, and is calculated more for common than heroick life. What Homer ſays of Argus is very natural, and I do not know any thing more beautiful or more affecting in the whole poem: I dare appeal to every perſon's judgment, if Argus be not as juſtly and properly repreſented, as the nobleſt figure in it. It is certain that the vermin which Homer mentions would de-

He, not unconſcious of the voice, and tread,
Lifts to the ſound his ear, and rears his head;
Bred by Ulyſſes, nouriſhed at his board,
But ah! not fated long to pleaſe his lord!
To him, his ſwiftneſs and his ſtrength were vain;
The voice of glory call'd him o'er the main.
'Till then in ev'ry ſilvan chace renown'd,
With Argus, Argus, rung the woods around;
With him the youth purſu'd the goat or fawn,
Or trac'd the mazy leveret o'er the lawn.
Now left to man's ingratitude he lay,
Unhous'd, neglected in the publick way;
And where on heaps the rich manure was ſpread,
Obſcene with reptiles, took his ſordid bed.

baſe our poetry, but in the Greek that very word is noble and ſonorous, Κυνοραϊςίαν: but how is the objection concerning the dunghill to be anſwered? We muſt have recourſe to the ſimplicity of manners amongſt the antients, who thought nothing mean that was of uſe to life. Ithaca was a barren country, full of rocks and mountains, and owed its fertility chiefly to cultivation, and for this reaſon ſuch circumſtantial cares were neceſſary. It is true ſuch a deſcription now is more proper for a peaſant than a king, but antiently it was no diſgrace for a king to perform with his own hands, what is now left only to peaſants. We read of a dictator taken from the plough, and why may not a king as well manure his field as plough it, without receding from his dignity? Virgil has put the ſame thing into a precept:

"Ne ſaturare ſimo pingui pudeat ſola."

He knew his lord; he knew, and ſtrove to meet;
In vain he ſtrove, to crawl, and kiſs his feet;
Yet (all he could) his tail, his ears, his eyes
Salute his maſter, and confeſs his joys.
Soft pity touch'd the mighty maſter's ſoul;
Adown his cheek a tear unbidden ſtole,

v. 361. *In vain he ſtrove, to crawl, and kiſs his feet.*] It may ſeem that this circumſtance was inſerted caſually, or at leaſt only to ſhew the age and infirmity of Argus: but there is a further intent in it: if the dog had ran to Ulyſſes and fawned upon him, it would have raiſed a ſtrong ſuſpicion in Eumæus that he was not ſuch a ſtranger to the Ithacans as he pretended, but ſome perſon in diſguiſe; and this might have occaſioned an unſeaſonable diſcovery. *Euſtathius.*

v. 364. *Soft pity touch'd the mighty maſter's ſoul.*] I confeſs myſelf touched with the tenderneſs of theſe tears in Ulyſſes; I would willingly think that they proceed from a better principle than the weakneſs of human nature, and are an inſtance of a really virtuous, and compaſſionate diſpoſition.

—— —— ἀγαθοὶ δ' ἀιδάκρυες ἄνδρες.

Good men are eaſily moved to tears: in my judgment Ulyſſes appears more amiable while he weeps over his faithful dog, than when he drives an army of enemies before him: That ſhews him to be a great hero, This a good man. It was undoubtedly an inſtance of an excellent diſpoſition in one of the fathers who prayed for the *grace of tears.*

—— —— —— "molliſſima corda
"Humano generi dare ſe natura fatetur,
"Quæ lachrymas dedit; hæc noſtri pars optima ſenſus."
Juv. Sat. xv.

Stole unperceiv'd; he turn'd his head and dry'd
The drop humane: then thus impaſſion'd cry'd.
What noble beaſt in this abandon'd ſtate
Lies here all helpleſs at Ulyſſes' gate?
His bulk and beauty ſpeak no vulgar praiſe;
If, as he ſeems, he *was* in better days,
Some care his age deſerves: or was he priz'd
For worthleſs beauty! therefore now deſpis'd?
Such dogs, and men there are, meer things of ſtate,
And always cheriſh'd by their friends, the great.
Not Argus ſo, (Eumæus thus rejoin'd)
But ſerv'd a maſter of a nobler kind,
Who never, never ſhall behold him more!
Long, long ſince periſh'd on a diſtant ſhore!
Oh had you ſeen him, vig'rous, bold, and young,
Swift as a ſtag, and as a lion ſtrong;

And Dryden,

Each gentle mind the ſoft infection felt,
For richeſt metals are moſt apt to melt.

v. 374. *Such dogs, and men there are, meer things of ſtate,*
And always cheriſh'd by their friends, the great.]

It is in the Greek ἄναχτες, or *kings*; but the word is not to be taken in too ſtrict a ſenſe; it implies *all perſons of diſtinction*, or οἰκοδεσπόται, like the word *rex* in Horace.

"Regibus hic mos eſt ubi equos mercantur."

And *reginæ* in Terence (as Dacier obſerves) is uſed in the ſame manner.

—— "Eunuchum porrò dixti velle te:
"Quia ſolæ utuntur his reginæ."

Him no fell ſavage on the plain withſtood,
None 'ſcap'd him, boſom'd in the gloomy wood;
His eye how piercing, and his ſcent how true,
To winde the vapour in the tainted dew!
Such, when Ulyſſes left his natal coaſt;
Now years un-nerve him, and his lord is loſt!
The women keep the gen'rous creature bare,
A ſleek and idle race is all their care:
The maſter gone, the ſervants what reſtrains?
Or dwells humanity where riot reigns?
Jove fix'd it certain, that whatever day
Makes man a ſlave, takes half his worth away.

v. 392. ——— *Whatever day*
Makes man a ſlave, takes half his worth away.]

This is a very remarkable ſentence, and commonly found to be true. Longinus, in his enquiry into the decay of human wit, quotes it. "Servitude, be it never ſo juſtly "eſtabliſhed, is a kind of priſon, wherein the ſoul ſhrinks "in ſome meaſure, and diminiſhes by conſtraint: it has "the ſame effect with the boxes in which dwarfs are in-"cloſed, which not only hinder the body from its "growth, but make it leſs by the conſtriction. It is ob-"ſervable that all the great orators flouriſhed in repub-"licks, and indeed what is there that raiſes the ſouls of "great men more than liberty? In other governments "men commonly become inſtead of orators, pompous "flatterers: a man born in ſervitude may be capable of "other ſciences; but no ſlave can ever be an orator; "for while the mind is depreſt and broken by ſlavery, "it will never dare to think or ſay any thing bold and "noble; all the vigour evaporates, and it remains as it "were confined in a priſon." *Etiam fera animalia, ſi clauſa teneas, virtutis obliviſcuntur.* Tacit. Hiſt. lib. iv.

This ſaid, the honeſt herdſman ſtrode before:
The muſing monarch pauſes at the door:
The dog whom Fate had granted to behold
His lord, when twenty tedious years had roll'd,
Takes a laſt look, and having ſeen him, dies;
So clos'd for ever faithful Argus' eyes!

Theſe verſes are quoted in Plato, lib. vi. *de legibus*, but ſomewhat differently from our editions.

Ἥμισυ γάρ τε νόου ἀποαίϊται εὐρύοπα Ζεὺς
Ἀνδρῶν ὅς κ' ἂν δὴ, &c.

However this aphoriſm is to be underſtood only generally, not univerſally: Eumæus who utters it is an inſtance to the contrary, who retains his virtue in a ſtate of ſubjection; and Plato ſpeaks to the ſame purpoſe, aſſerting that ſome ſlaves have been found of ſuch virtue as to be preferred to a ſon or brother; and have often preſerved their maſters and their families.

v. 399. *So clos'd for ever faithful Argus' eyes!*] It has been a queſtion what occaſioned the death of Argus, at the inſtant he ſaw Ulyſſes: Euſtathius imputes it to the joy he felt at the ſight of his maſter. But there has another objection been ſtarted againſt Homer, for aſcribing ſo long a life as twenty years to Argus, and that dogs never ſurpaſs the fifteenth year; but this is an errour; Ariſtotle affirms, that ſome dogs live two and twenty, and other naturaliſts ſubſcribe to his judgment. Euſtathius tells us, that other writers agree, that ſome dogs live twenty-four years. Pliny thus writes, *Canes Laconici vivunt annis denis, fœminæ duodenis, cætera genera quindecim annos, aliquando viginti.* Madam Dacier mentions ſome of her own knowledge that lived twenty-three years; and the tranſlator, not to fall ſhort of theſe illuſtrious examples, has known one that died at twenty-two big with puppies.

And now Telemachus, the firſt of all,
Obſerv'd Eumæus ent'ring in the hall;
Diſtant he ſaw, acroſs the ſhady dome;
Then gave a ſign, and beckon'd him to come:
There ſtood an empty ſeat, where late was plac'd
In order due, the ſteward of the feaſt,
(Who now was buſied carving round the board)
Eumæus took, and plac'd it near his lord.
Before him inſtant was the banquet ſpread,
And the bright baſket pil'd with loaves of bread.
Next came Ulyſſes, lowly at the door,
A figure deſpicable, old, and poor,
In ſqualid veſts with many a gaping rent,
Propt on a ſtaff, and trembling as he went.
Then, reſting on the threſhold of the gate,
Againſt a cypreſs pillar lean'd his weight;
(Smooth'd by the workman to a poliſh'd plain)
The thoughtful ſon beheld, and call'd his ſwain:
Theſe viands, and this bread, Eumæus! bear,
And let yon' mendicant our plenty ſhare:
Then let him circle round the ſuitors board,
And try the bounty of each gracious lord.
Bold let him aſk, encourag'd thus by me;
How ill, alas! do want and ſhame agree?

v. 423. *How ill, alas! do want and ſhame agree?*] We are not to imagine that Homer is here recommending immodeſty; but to underſtand him as ſpeaking of a decent aſſurance, in oppoſition to a faulty ſhame or baſhfulneſs. The verſe in the Greek is remarkable.

Αἰδὼς δ' οὐκ ἀγαθὴ πεχρημένῳ ἀνδρὶ πτοίλῃ.

His lord's command the faithful ſervant bears;
The ſeeming beggar anſwers with his pray'rs.
Bleſt be Telemachus! in ev'ry deed
Inſpire him Jove! in ev'ry wiſh ſucceed!
This ſaid, the portion from his ſon convey'd
With ſmiles receiving on his ſcrip he lay'd.
Long as the minſtrel ſwept the ſounding wire,
He fed, and ceas'd when ſilence held the lyre.
Soon as the ſuitors from the banquet roſe,
Minerva prompts the man of mighty woes

A perſon of great learning has obſerved that there is a tautology in the three laſt words; in *a beggar that wants*: as if the very notion of a beggar did not imply want. Indeed Plato, who cites this verſe in his Charmides, uſes another word inſtead of πρηΐλη, and inſerts παρεῖναι. Heſiod likewiſe, who makes uſe of the ſame line, inſtead of πρηΐλη reads κομίζει, which would almoſt induce us to believe that they thought there was a tautology in Homer. It has therefore been conjectured, that the word πρηΐλης ſhould be inſerted in the place of πρηΐλη; I am ſorry that the conſtruction will not allow it; that word is of the maſculine gender, and ἀγαθὴ which of the femine cannot agree with it. We may indeed ſubſtitute ἀγαθὸς, and then the ſenſe will be *baſhfulneſs is no good petitioner for a beggar*; but this muſt be done without authority. We muſt therefore thus underſtand Homer; "Too much modeſty is not good for a poor man, who "lives by begging," πρηΐλη; and this ſolution clears the verſe from the tautology, for a man may be in want, and not be a beggar; or (as Homer expreſſes it) κεχρημένος, and yet not πρηΐλης.

v. 433. *Minerva prompts*, &c.] This is a circumſtance that occurs almoſt in every book of the Odyſſey, and

To tempt their bounties with a ſuppliant's art,
And learn the gen'rous from th' ignoble heart;

Pallas has been thought to mean no more than the inherent wiſdom of Ulyſſes, which guides all his actions upon all emergencies: it is not impoſſible but the poet might intend to inculcate, that the wiſdom of man is the gift of heaven, and a bleſſing from the Gods. But then is it not a derogation to Ulyſſes, to think nothing but what the Goddeſs dictates? and a reſtraint of human liberty, to act ſolely by the impulſe of a Deity? Plutarch in his life of Coriolanus excellently ſolves this difficulty; "Men (obſerves that author) are ready to cenſure and "deſpiſe the poet, as if he deſtroyed the uſe of reaſon, "and the freedom of their choice, by continually aſcrib-"ing every ſuggeſtion of heart to the influence of a "Goddeſs: whereas he introduces a Deity not to take "away the liberty of the will, but as moving it to act "with freedom; the Deity does not work in us the in-"clinations, but only offers the object to our minds, "from whence we conceive the impulſe, and form our "reſolutions." However theſe influences do not make the action involuntary, but only give a beginning to ſpontaneous operations; for we muſt either remove God from all manner of cauſality, or confeſs that he inviſibly aſſiſts us by a ſecret co-operation. For it is abſurd to imagine that the help he lends us, conſiſts in faſhioning the poſtures of the body, or directing the corporeal motions: but in influencing our ſouls, and exciting the inward faculties into action by ſecret impulſes from above; or, on the contrary, by raiſing an averſion in the ſoul, to reſtrain us from action. It is true in ordinary affairs of life, in matters that are brought about by the ordinary way of reaſon, Homer aſcribes the execution of them to human performance, and frequently repreſents his heroes calling a council in their own breaſts, and acting according to

(Not but his ſoul, reſentful as humane, 436
Dooms to full vengeance all th' offending train)

the dictates of reaſon: but in actions unaccountably daring, of a tranſcendent nature, there they are ſaid to be carried away by a divine impulſe or enthuſiaſm, and it is no longer human reaſon, but a God that influences the ſoul.

I have already obſerved, that Homer makes uſe of machines ſometimes merely for ornament; this place is an inſtance of it: here is no action of an uncommon nature performed, and yet Pallas directs Ulyſſes: Plutarch very juſtly obſerves, that whenever the heroes of Homer execute any prodigious exploit of valour, he continually introduces a Deity, who aſſiſts in the performance of it; but it is alſo true, that to ſhew the dependance of man upon the aſſiſtance of Heaven, he frequently aſcribes the common dictates of wiſdom to the Goddeſs of it. If we take the act here inſpired by Minerva, as it lies nakedly in Homer, it is no more than a bare command to beg; an act, that needs not the wiſdom of a Goddeſs to command: but we are to underſtand it as a direction to Ulyſſes how to behave before the ſuitors upon his firſt appearance, how to carry on his diſguiſe ſo artfully as to prevent all ſuſpicions, and take his meaſures ſo effectually as to work his own re-eſtabliſhment: in this light, the command becomes worthy of a Goddeſs: the act of begging is only the method by which he carries on his deſign; the conſequence of it is the main point in view, namely, the ſuitors deſtruction. The reſt is only the ſtratagem, by which he obtains the victory.

v. 435. *And learn the gen'rous from th' ignoble heart;*
(Not but his ſoul, reſentful as humane,
Dooms to full vengeance all th' offending train).]

A ſingle virtue, or act of humanity, is not a ſufficient atonement for a whole life of inſolence and oppreſſion; ſo that although ſome of the ſuitors ſhould be found leſs guilty than the reſt, yet they are ſtill too guilty to deſerve impunity.

With ſpeaking eyes, and voice of plaintiff ſound,
Humble he moves, imploring all around.
The proud feel pity, and relief beſtow,
With ſuch an image touch'd of human woe;
Enquiring all, their wonder they confeſs,
And eye the man, majeſtick in diſtreſs.
While thus they gaze and queſtion with their eyes,
The bold Melanthius to their thought replies.
My lords! this ſtranger of gigantick port
The good Eumæus uſher'd to your court.
Full well I mark'd the features of his face,
Tho' all unknown his clime, or noble race.
And is this preſent, ſwineherd! of thy hand?
Bring'ſt thou theſe vagrants to infeſt the land!
(Returns Antinous with retorted eye)
Objects uncouth! to check the genial joy.
Enough of theſe our court already grace,
Of giant ſtomach, and of famiſh'd face.

v. 438. *With ſpeaking eyes, and voice of plantive ſound, Humble he moves,* &c.]

Homer inſerts this particularity to ſhew the complying nature of Ulyſſes in all fortunes; he is every where πολύτροπος, it is his diſtinguiſhing character in the firſt verſe of the Odyſſey, and it is viſible in every part of it. He is an artiſt in the trade of begging, as Euſtathius obſerves, and knows how to become the loweſt, as well the higheſt ſtation.

Homer adds, that the ſuitors were ſtruck with wonder at the ſight of Ulyſſes. That is (ſays Euſtathius) becauſe they never had before ſeen him in Ithaca, and concluded him to be a foreigner. But I rather think it is a compliment Homer pays to his hero to repreſent his port and figure to be ſuch, as though a beggar, ſtruck them with aſtoniſhment.

Such gueſts Eumæus to his country brings,
To ſhare our feaſt, and lead the life of kings.
To whom the hoſpitable ſwain rejoin'd:
Thy paſſion, prince, belies thy knowing mind.
Who calls, from diſtant nations to his own,
The poor, diſtinguiſh'd by their wants alone?
Round the wide world are ſought thoſe men divine
Who publick ſtructures raiſe, or who deſign;
Thoſe to whoſe eyes the Gods their ways reveal,
Or bleſs with ſalutary arts to heal;
But chief to poets ſuch reſpect belongs,
By rival nations courted for their ſongs;
Theſe ſtates invite and mighty kings admire,
Wide as the ſun diſplays his vital fire.
It is not ſo with want! how few that feed
A wretch unhappy, merely for his need?
Unjuſt to me and all that ſerve the ſtate,
To love Ulyſſes is to raiſe thy hate.
For me, ſuffice the approbation won
Of my great miſtreſs, and her God-like ſon.

v. 462. *Round the wide world are ſought thoſe men divine*, &c.] This is an evidence of the great honour antiently paid to perſons eminent in mechanick arts: the architect, and publick artiſans, δημιουργοὶ, are joined with the prophet, phyſician, and poet, who were eſteemed almoſt with a religious veneration, and looked upon as publick bleſſings. Honour was antiently given to men in proportion to the benefits they brought to ſociety: a uſeleſs great man is a burthen to the earth, while the meaneſt artiſan is beneficial to his fellow-creatures, and uſeful in his generation.

To him Telemachus. No more incenſe
The man by nature prone to inſolence:
Injurious minds juſt anſwers but provoke—
Then turning to Antinous, thus he ſpoke.
Thanks to thy care! whoſe abſolute command
Thus drives the ſtranger from our court and land.
Heav'n bleſs its owner with a better mind!
From envy free, to charity inclin'd.
This both Penelope and I afford:
Then, prince! be bounteous of Ulyſſes' board.
To give another's is thy hand ſo ſlow?
So much more ſweet, to ſpoil, than to beſtow?
Whence, great Telemachus! this lofty ſtrain?
(Antinous cries with inſolent diſdain)
Portions like mine if ev'ry ſuitor gave,
Our walls this twelvemonth ſhould not ſee the ſlave.
He ſpoke, and lifting high above the board
His pond'rous footſtool, ſhook it at his lord.
The reſt with equal hand conferr'd the bread;
He fill'd his ſcrip, and to the threſhold ſped;
But firſt before Antinous ſtopt, and ſaid.
Beſtow, my friend! thou doſt not ſeem the worſt
Of all the Greeks, but prince-like and the firſt;

v. 497. *Beſtow my friend!* &c.] Ulyſſes here acts with a prudent diſſimulation; he pretends not to have underſtood the irony of Antinous, nor to have obſerved his preparation to ſtrike him: and therefore proceeds as if he apprehended no danger. This at once ſhews the patience of Ulyſſes, who is inured to ſufferings, and gives a founda-

Then as in dignity, be firſt in worth,
And I ſhall praiſe thee thro' the boundleſs earth.
Once I enjoy'd in luxury of ſtate
Whate'er gives man the envy'd name of great;
Wealth, ſervants, friends, were mine in better days;
And hoſpitality was then my praiſe;
In ev'ry ſorrowing ſoul I pour'd delight,
And poverty ſtood ſmiling in my ſight.
But Jove, all-governing, whoſe only will
Determines fate, and mingles good with ill,
Sent me (to puniſh my purſuit of gain)
With roving pirates o'er th' Ægyptian main:

tion for the puniſhment of Antinous in the concluſion of the Odyſſey.

It is obſervable, that Ulyſſes gives his own hiſtory in the ſame words as in the fourteenth book, yet varies from it in the concluſion; he there ſpeaks to Eumæus, and Eumæus is here preſent, and hears the ſtory: how is it then that he does not obſerve the falſification of Ulyſſes, and conclude him to be an impoſtor? Euſtathius labours for an anſwer; he imagines that Eumæus was inadvertent, or had forgot the former relation, and yet aſſerts that the reaſon why Ulyſſes tells the ſame hiſtory in part to Antinous, proceeds from a fear of detection in Eumæus. I would rather imagine that Ulyſſes makes the deviation, truſting to the judgment of Eumæus, who might conclude that there was ſome good reaſon why he forbears to let Antinous into the full hiſtory of his life; eſpecially, becauſe he was an enemy both to Ulyſſes and Eumæus: he might therefore eaſily reflect, that the difference of his ſtory aroſe from prudence and deſign, rather than from impoſture and falſhood.

By Ægypt's ſilver flood our ſhips we moor;
Our ſpies commiſſion'd ſtraight the coaſt explore;
But impotent of mind, with lawleſs will
The country ravage, and the natives kill.
The ſpreading clamour to their city flies,
And horſe and foot in mingled tumult riſe:
The redd'ning dawn reveals the hoſtile fields
Horrid with briſtly ſpears, and gleaming ſhields:
Jove thunder'd on their ſide: our guilty head
We turn'd to flight; the gath'ring vengeance ſpread
On all parts round, and heaps on heaps lay dead.
Some few the foes in ſervitude detain;
Death ill exchang'd for bondage and for pain!
Unhappy me a Cyprian took a-board,
And gave to Dmetor, Cyprus' haughty lord:

v. 525. *And gave to Dmetor, Cyprus' haughty lord.*] We are not to ſearch too exactly into hiſtorick truth among the fictions of poetry; but it is very probable that this Dmetor was really king of Cyprus. Euſtathius is of this opinion; but it may be objected, that Cinyras was king of Cyprus in the time of Ulyſſes. Thus lib. xi. Iliad.

> The beaming cuiraſs next adorn'd his breaſt;
> The ſame which once king Cinyras poſſeſt;
> The fame of Greece, and her aſſembled hoſt,
> Had reach'd that monarch on the Cyprian coaſt.

The anſwer is, there were almoſt twenty years elapſed ſince the mention of this breaſt-plate of Cinyras; this king therefore being dead, Dmetor poſſeſt the Cyprian throne.

Hither, to 'ſcape his chains, my courſe I ſteer
Still curſt by fortune, and inſulted here!
To whom Antinous thus his rage expreſt.
What God has plagu'd us with this gormand gueſt?
Unleſs at diſtance, wretch! thou keep behind,
Another iſle, than Cyprus more unkind;
Another Ægypt, ſhalt thou quickly find.
From all thou beg'ſt, a bold audacious ſlave;
Nor all can give ſo much as thou canſt crave.
Nor wonder I, at ſuch profuſion ſhown;
Shameleſs they give, who give what's not their own.
The chief, retiring. Souls like that in thee,
Ill ſuit ſuch forms of grace and dignity.
Nor will that hand to utmoſt need afford
The ſmalleſt portion of a waſteful board,
Whoſe luxury whole patrimonies ſweeps,
Yet ſtarving want, amidſt the riot, weeps,
The haughty ſuitor with reſentment burns,
And ſow'rly ſmiling, this reply returns.
Take that, ere yet thou quit this princely throng:
And dumb for ever be thy ſland'rous tongue!
He ſaid, and high the whirling tripod flung.

v. 532. *Another Ægypt*, &c.] This paſſage is a full demonſtration that the country was called Ægypt in the days of Homer, as well as the river Nilus; for in the ſpeech he uſes Αἴγυπτος in the maſculine gender to denote the river, and here he calls it πάρην Αἴγυπτον in the feminine, to ſhew that he ſpeaks of the country: the former word agreeing with ποτάμος, the latter with γαῖα.

His ſhoulder-blade receiv'd th' ungentle ſhock;
He ſtood, and mov'd not, like a marble rock;
But ſhook his thoughtful head, nor more complain'd,
Sedate of ſoul, his character ſuſtain'd,
And inly form'd revenge: then back withdrew;
Before his feet the well-fill'd ſcrip he threw,
And thus with ſemblance mild addreſt the crew.
May what I ſpeak your princely minds approve,
Ye peers and rivals in this noble love!
Not for the hurt I grieve, but for the cauſe.
If, when the ſword our country's quarrel draws,

v. 557. *Not for the hurt I grieve, but for the cauſe.*] The reaſoning of Ulyſſes in the original is not without ſome obſcurity: for how can it be affirmed, that it is no great affliction to have our property invaded, and to be wounded in the defence of it? The beggar who ſuffers for aſking an alms, has no injury done him, except the violence offered to his perſon; but it is a double injury, to ſuffer both in our perſons and properties. We muſt therefore ſuppoſe that Ulyſſes means, that the importance of the cauſe, when our rights are invaded, is equal to the danger, and that we ought to ſuffer wounds, or even death, in defence of it; and that a brave man grieves not at ſuch laudable adventures. Or perhaps Ulyſſes ſpeaks only with reſpect to Antinous, and means that it is a greater injury to offer violence to the poor and the ſtranger, than to perſons of greater fortunes and ſtation.

Euſtathius gives a deeper meaning to the ſpeech of Ulyſſes; he applies it to his preſent condition, and it is the ſame as if he had ſaid openly; It would be no great matter if I had been wounded in defence of my palace

Or if defending what is juſtly dear,
From Mars impartial ſome broad wound we bear;
The gen'rous motive dignifies the ſcar.
But for mere want, how hard to ſuffer wrong?
Want brings enough of other ills along!
Yet if injuſtice never be ſecure,
If fiends revenge, and Gods aſſert the poor,
Death ſhall lay low the proud aggreſſor's head,
And make the duſt Antinous' bridal bed.
Peace wretch! and eat thy bread without offence,
(The ſuitor cry'd) or force ſhall drag thee hence,
Scourge thro' the publick ſtreet, and caſt thee there,
A mangled carcaſe for the hounds to tear.
His furious deed the gen'ral anger mov'd,
All, ev'n the worſt, condemn'd: and ſome reprov'd.
Was ever chief for wars like theſe renown'd?
Ill fits the ſtranger and the poor to wound.
Unbleſt thy hand! if in this low diſguiſe
Wander, perhaps, ſome inmate of the ſkies;

and other properties, but to ſuffer only for aſking an alms, this is a deep affliction. So that Ulyſſes ſpeaks in general, but intends his own particular condition; and the import of the whole is, I grieve to ſuffer, not upon any weighty account, but only for being poor and hungry.

They (curious oft' of mortal actions) deign
In forms like theſe, to round the earth and main,
Juſt and unjuſt recording in their mind,
And with ſure eyes inſpecting all mankind.
Telemachus abſorpt in thought ſevere,
Nouriſh'd deep anguiſh, tho' he ſhed no tear;

v. 578. *They (curious oft' of mortal actions)* &c.] We have already obſerved, that it was the opinion of the antients, that the Gods frequently aſſumed an human ſhape. Thus Ovid of Jupiter.

—— —— —— "Summo delabor Olympo,
"Et Deus humanâ luſtro ſub imagine terras."

I refer the reader to the objections of Plato, mentioned in the preceding book. It is obſervable, that Homer puts this remarkable truth into the mouth of the ſuitors, to ſhew that it was certain and undeniable, when it is atteſted even by ſuch perſons as had no piety or religion.

v. 582. *Telemachus* — — —
Nouriſh'd deep anguiſh, tho' he ſhed no tear.]

This is ſpoken with particular judgment; Telemachus is here to act the part of a wiſe man, not of a tender ſon; he reſtrains his tears leſt they ſhould betray his father, it being improbable that he ſhould weep for a vagabond and beggar. We find he has profited by the inſtructions of Ulyſſes, and practiſes the injunctions given in the former book.

— — If ſcorn inſult my reverend age,
Bear it, my ſon: repreſs thy riſing rage.
If outrag'd, ceaſe that outrage to repel,
Bear it my ſon, tho' thy brave heart rebel.

Telemachus ſtruggles againſt the yearnings of nature, and ſhews himſelf to be a maſter of his paſſions; he muſt therefore be thought to exert an act of wiſdom, not of inſenſibility.

But the dark brow of ſilent ſorrow ſhook:
While thus his mother to her virgins ſpoke.
" On him and his may the bright God of day
" That baſe, inhoſpitable blow repay!"
The nurſe replies: " If Jove receives my pray'r,
" Not one ſurvives to breathe to-morrow's air."
All, all are foes, and miſchief is their end;
Antinous moſt to gloomy death a friend;
(Replies the queen) the ſtranger begg'd their grace,
And melting pity ſoften'd ev'ry face;
From ev'ry other hand redreſs he found,
But fell Antinous anſwer'd with a wound.
Amidſt her maids thus ſpoke the prudent queen,
Then bad Eumæus call the pilgrim in.
Much of th' experienc'd man I long to hear,
If or his certain eye, or liſt'ning ear
Have learn'd the fortunes of my wand'ring lord?
Thus ſhe, and good Eumæus took the word.
A private audience if thy grace impart,
The ſtranger's words may eaſe the royal heart.
His ſacred eloquence in balm diſtils,
And the ſooth'd heart with ſecret pleaſure fills.
Three days have ſpent their beams, three nights have run
Their ſilent journey, ſince his tale begun,
Unfiniſh'd yet! and yet I thirſt to hear!
As when ſome Heav'n-taught poet charms the ear,
(Suſpending ſorrow with celeſtial ſtrain
Breath'd from the Gods to ſoften human pain)

Time ſteals away with unregarded wing,
And the ſoul hears him, tho' he ceaſe to ſing.

Ulyſſes late he ſaw, on Cretan ground,
(His father's gueſt) for Minos' birth renown'd.
He now but waits the wind, to waft him o'er
With boundleſs treaſure, from Theſprotia's ſhore.

To this the queen. The wand'rer let me hear,
While yon luxuriant race indulge their cheer,
Devour the grazing ox and browzing goat,
And turn my gen'rous vintage down their throat.
For where's an arm, like thine Ulyſſes! ſtrong,
To curb wild riot and to puniſh wrong?

v. 615. ——*for Minos' birth renown'd.*] Diodorus Siculus thus writes of Minos: "He was the ſon of Jupiter and "Europa, who was fabled to be carried by a bull, that is, "in a ſhip called the bull, or that had the image of a bull "carved upon its prow) into Crete: here Minos reigned, "and built many cities: he eſtabliſhed many laws among "the Cretans: he alſo provided a navy, by which he "ſubdued many of the adjacent iſlands. The expreſ-"ſion in the Greek will bear a two-fold ſenſe; and im-"plies either where Minos *was born*, or where the *de-"ſcendants* of Minos *reign*; for Idomenæus, who go-"verned Crete in the days of Ulyſſes, was a deſcendant "of Minos, from his ſon Deucalion."

Homer mentions it as an honour to Crete, to have given birth to ſo great a law-giver as Minos; and it is univerſally true, that every great man is an honour to his country: Athens did not give reputation to learned men, but learned men to Athens.

She ſpoke. Telemachus then ſneez'd aloud;
Conſtrain'd, his noſtril echo'd thro' the crowd. 625

v. 624. —— *Telemachus then ſneez'd aloud.*] Euſtathius fully explains the nature of this omen; for ſneezing was reckoned ominous both by the Greeks and Romans. While Penelope uttered theſe words, Telemachus ſneezes; Penelope accepts the omen, and expects the words to be verified. The original of the veneration paid to ſneezing is this: The head is the moſt ſacred part of the body, the ſeat of thought and reaſon: now the ſneeze coming from the head, the antients looked upon it as a ſign or omen, and believed it to be ſent by Jupiter; therefore they regarded it with a kind of adoration: the reader will have a full idea of the nature of the omen of ſneezing here mentioned, from a ſingular inſtance in lib. iii. of Xenophon, in his expedition of Cyrus. Xenophon having ended a ſhort ſpeech to his ſoldiers with theſe words, viz. "We have many reaſons to hope for preſervation;" they were ſcarce uttered, when a certain ſoldier ſneezed: the whole army took the omen, and at once paid adoration to the Gods; then Xenophon reſuming his diſcourſe, proceeded, "Since, my fellow-ſoldiers, at the mention "of our preſervation, Jupiter has ſent this omen," &c. So that Xenophon fully explains Homer.

Sneezing was likewiſe reckoned ominous by the Romans. Thus Catullus,

"Hoc ut dixit, Amor ſiniſtra ut ante
"Dextram ſternuit approbationem."

Thus alſo Propertius,

"Num tibi naſcenti primis, mea vita, diebus
"Aridus argutum ſternuit omen amor.

We find in all theſe inſtances that ſneezing was conſtantly received as a good omen, or a ſign of approbation from

The ſmiling queen the happy omen bleſt:
" So may theſe impious fall, by Fate oppreſt!"
Then to Eumæus: bring the ſtranger, fly!
And if my queſtions meet a true reply,
Grac'd with a decent robe he ſhall retire,
A gift in ſeaſon which his wants require.

Thus ſpoke Penelope. Eumæus flies
In duteous haſte, and to Ulyſſes cries.
The queen invites thee, venerable gueſt!
A ſecret inſtinct moves her troubled breaſt,
Of her long abſent lord from thee to gain
Some light, and ſoothe her ſoul's eternal pain.
If true, if faithful thou; her grateful mind
Of decent robes a preſent has deſign'd:

the Gods. In theſe ages we pay an idle ſuperſtition to ſneezing, but it is ever looked upon as a bad omen, and we cry, *God bleſs you*, upon hearing it, as the Greeks in later times ſaid ζῆθι or ζεῦ σῶσον. We are told this cuſtom aroſe from a mortal diſtemper that affected the head, and threw the patient into convulſive ſneezings that occaſioned his death.

I will only add from Euſtathius, that Homer expreſſes the loudneſs of the ſneezing, to give a reaſon why Penelope heard it, ſhe being in an apartment at ſome diſtance from Telemachus.

The ſneezing likewiſe gives us the reaſon why Penelope immediately commands Eumæus to introduce the beggar into her preſence: the omen gave her hopes to hear of Ulyſſes; ſhe ſaw the beggar was a ſtranger, and a traveller, and therefore expected he might be able to give her ſome information.

So finding favour in the royal eye,
Thy other wants her ſubjects ſhall ſupply.
  Fair truth alone (the patient man reply'd)
My words ſhall dictate, and my lips ſhall guide.
To him, to me, one common lot was giv'n,
In equal woes, alas! involv'd by Heav'n.
Much of his fates I know; but check'd by fear
I ſtand: the hand of violence is here:
Here boundleſs wrongs the ſtarry ſkies invade,
And injur'd ſuppliants ſeek in vain for aid.
Let for a ſpace the penſive queen attend,
Nor claim my ſtory till the ſun deſcend;
Then in ſuch robes as ſuppliants may require,
Compos'd and chearful by the genial fire,
When loud uproar and lawleſs riot ceaſe,
Shall her pleas'd ear receive my words in peace.
  Swift to the queen returns the gentle ſwain:
And ſay, (ſhe cries) does fear, or ſhame, detain

v. 644. *To him, to me, one common lot was giv'n,*
In equal woes, alas! involv'd by Heav'n.]

Theſe words bear a double ſenſe; one applicable to the ſpeaker, the other to the reader: the reader, who knows this beggar to be Ulyſſes, is pleaſed with the concealed meaning, and hears with pleaſure the beggar affirming that he is fully inſtructed in the misfortunes of Ulyſſes: but ſpeaking in the character of a beggar, he keeps Eumæus in ignorance, who believes he is reciting the adventures of a friend, while he really gives his own hiſtory.

The cautious ſtranger; With the begging kind
Shame ſuits but ill. Eumæus thus rejoin'd:
He only aſks a more propitious hour,
And ſhuns (who would not?) wicked men in pow'r;
At ev'ning mild (meet ſeaſon to confer)
By turns to queſtion, and by turns to hear.
Whoe'er this gueſt (the prudent queen replies)
His ev'ry ſtep and ev'ry thought is wiſe.
For men, like theſe, on earth he ſhall not find
In all the miſcreant race of human kind.
Thus ſhe. Eumæus all her words attends,
And parting, to the ſuitor pow'rs deſcends;
There ſeeks Telemachus, and thus apart
In whiſpers breathes the fondneſs of his heart.
The time, my lord, invites me to repair
Hence to the lodge; my charge demands my care.
Theſe ſons of murder thirſt thy life to take;
O guard it, guard it for thy ſervant's ſake!
Thanks to my friend, he cries; but now the hour
Of night draws on, go ſeek the rural bow'r:
But firſt refreſh: and at the dawn of day
Hither a victim to the Gods convey.
Our life to Heav'ns immortal Pow'rs we truſt,
Safe in their care, for Heav'n protects the juſt.

v. 676. — *but now the hour Of night draws on*——] The reader may look back to the beginning of the preceding book, for the explication of δείλον ἦμαρ, here mentioned by Homer.

Obſervant of his voice, Eumæus ſat
And fed recumbent on a chair of ſtate.
Then inſtant roſe, and as he mov'd along
'Twas riot all amid the ſuitor-throng,
They feaſt, they dance, and raiſe the mirthful ſong.
'Till now declining tow'rd the cloſe of day,
The ſun obliquely ſhot his dewy ray.

This book does not fully comprehend the ſpace of one day: it begins with the morning, and ends before night, ſo that the time here mentioned by the poet, is the evening of the thirty-ninth day.

THE EIGHTEENTH BOOK OF THE ODYSSEY.

THE ARGUMENT.

The Fight of Ulyſſes and Irus.

THE beggar Irus inſults Ulyſſes; the ſuitors promote the quarrel, in which Irus is worſted, and miſerably handled. Penelope deſcends, and receives the preſents of the ſuitors. The Dialogue of Ulyſſes with Eurymachus.

THE

*EIGHTEENTH BOOK

OF THE

ODYSSEY.

WHILE fix'd in thought the penſive hero ſat,
A mendicant approach'd the royal gate;
A ſurly vagrant of the giant kind,
The ſtain of manhood, of a coward mind:

* Homer has been ſeverely blamed for deſcribing Ulyſſes, a king, entering the liſts with a beggar: Rapin affirms, that he demeans himſelf by engaging with an unequal adverſary. The objection would be unanſwerable, if Ulyſſes appeared in his royal character: but it is as neceſſary in epick poetry, as on the theatre, to adapt the behaviour of every perſon to the character he is to repreſent, whether real or imaginary. Would it not have been ridiculous to have repreſented him, while he was diſguiſed in the garb of a beggar, refuſing the combat, becauſe he knew himſelf to be a king? and would not ſuch a conduct have endangered a diſcovery? Ought we not rather to look upon this epiſode as an inſtance of the greatneſs of the calamities of Ulyſſes, who is reduced to

From feaſt to feaſt, inſatiate to devour
He flew, attendant on the genial hour.
Him on his mother's knees, when babe he lay,
She nam'd Arnæus on his natal day:

ſuch uncommon extremities as to be ſet upon a level with the meaneſt of wretches?

v. 8. *She nam'd Arnæus*——] It ſeems probable from this paſſage, that the mother gave the name to the child in the days of Homer; though perhaps not without the concurrence of the father: thus in the ſcriptures it is ſaid of Leah, that *ſhe bare a ſon and called his name Reuben*; and again, *ſhe called his name Simeon*; and the ſame is frequently repeated both of Leah and Rachel. In the age of Ariſtophanes, the giving a name to the child ſeems to have been a divided prerogative between the father and mother: for in his Νέφελαι there is a diſpute between Strepſiades and his wife, concerning the name of their ſon: the wife was of noble birth, and would therefore give him a noble name; the huſband was a plain villager, and was rather for a name that denoted frugality: but the woman not waving the leaſt branch of her prerogative, they compromiſed the affair, by giving the child a compounded name that implied both frugality and chivalry, derived from φείδω *to ſpare*, and ἵππος *an horſe*; and the young cavalier's name was Phidippides. Euſtathius affirms, that antiently the mother named the child; and the ſcholiaſt upon Ariſtophanes in avib. quotes a fragment from Euripides to this purpoſe from a play called Ægeus.

Τί σὲ μάτηρ ἐν δεκάτᾳ τίκτων ὠνόμαστ.

What was the name given on the tenth day by the mother to thee, the child? Dacier tells us, that the name of Arnæus was prophetic ὑπὸ τῶν ἀρνῶν, *from the ſheep the glutton would*

But Irus his aſſociates call'd the boy,
Practis'd the common meſſenger to fly;
Irus, a name expreſſive of th' employ.

From his own roof, with meditated blows,
He ſtrove to drive the man of mighty woes.

Hence dotard, hence! and timely ſpeed thy way,
Leſt dragg'd in vengeance thou repent thy ſtay;
See how with nods aſſent yon princely train!
But honouring age, in mercy I refrain;
In peace away! leſt, if perſuaſions fail,
This arm with blows more eloquent prevail.

To whom, with ſtern regard: O inſolence,
Indecently to rail without offence!
What bounty gives, without a rival ſhare;
I aſk, what harms not thee, to breathe this air:

devour when he came to manhood; but this is mere fancy, and it is no reaſon, becauſe he proved a glutton, that therefore the name foretold it; one might rather think the fondneſs of the mother toward her infant, ſuggeſted a very different view: ſhe gave the name according to her wiſhes, and flattered herſelf that he would prove a very rich man, *a man of many flocks and herds*: and therefore ſhe called him Ἀγραῖος: and this is the more probable, becauſe all riches originally conſiſted in flocks and herds.

v. 11. *Irus a name expreſſive of th' employ.*] To underſtand this, we muſt have recourſe to the derivation of the word Irus; it comes from εἴρω, which ſignifies *nuncio*; Irus was therefore ſo called, becauſe he was a public meſſenger; and Irus bears that name, as the meſſenger of the Gods; Ἶρος, ἀπαγγέλλων; Ἶρις, Ἄγγελος. *Heſychius.*

Alike on alms we both precarious live:
And canſt thou envy, when the great relieve?
Know from the bounteous Heav'ns all riches flow,
And what man gives, the Gods by man beſtow;
Proud as thou art, henceforth no more be proud,
Leſt I imprint my vengeance in thy blood;
Old as I am, ſhould once my fury burn,
How would'ſt thou fly, nor ev'n in thought return?

Mere woman-glutton! (thus the churl reply'd)
A tongue ſo flippant, with a throat ſo wide!
Why ceaſe I, Gods! to daſh thoſe teeth away,
Like ſome vile boar's, that greedy of his prey
Uproots the bearded corn? riſe, try the fight,
Gird well thy loins, approach and feel my might:

v. 34. — — *To daſh thoſe teeth away,*
Like ſome wild boar's]

Theſe words refer to a cuſtom that prevailed in former ages: it was allowed to ſtrike out the teeth of any beaſt which the owner found in his grounds: Euſtathius informs us, that this was a cuſtom or law amongſt the people of Cyprus; but from what Homer here ſpeaks, it ſeems to have been a general practice; at leaſt it was in uſe amongſt the Ithacans.

v. 37, *Gird well thy loins.*] We may gather from hence the manner of the ſingle combat; the champions fought naked, and only made uſe of a cincture round the loins out of decency. Homer directly affirms it, when Ulyſſes prepares for the fight.

Then girding his ſtrong loins, the king prepares
To cloſe in combat, and his body bares;

Sure of defeat, before the peers engage;
Unequal fight! when youth contends with age!
Thus in a wordy war their tongues diſplay
More fierce intents, preluding to the fray;
Antinous hears, and in a jovial vein,
Thus with loud laughter to the ſuitor-train.
This happy day in mirth, my friends, employ,
And lo! the Gods conſpire to crown our joy.
See ready for the fight, and hand to hand,
Yon ſurly mendicants contentious ſtand;
Why urge we not to blows? Well pleas'd they ſpring
Swift from their ſeats, and thick'ning form a ring.
To whom Antinous. Lo! enrich'd with blood,
A kid's well-fatted entrails (taſteful food)
On glowing embers lie; on him beſtow
The choiceſt portion who ſubdues his foe;

Broad ſpread his ſhoulders, and his nervous thighs
By juſt degrees like well turn'd columns riſe;
Ample his cheſt, his arms are round and long,
And each ſtrong joint Minerva knits more ſtrong.

Thus Diomed in the Iliad girds his friend Euryalus when he engages Epæus.

Officious with the cincture girds him round.

The ſpeeches here are ſhort, and the periods remarkably conciſe, ſuitable to the nature of anger. The reader may conſult the annotations on the xxth book, concerning the goat's entrails mentioned here by Antinous.

Grant him unrival'd in theſe walls to ſtay,
The ſole attendant on the genial day.
The lords applaud: Ulyſſes then with art,
And fears well-feign'd, diſguis'd his dauntleſs heart:
Worn as I am with age, decay'd with woe;
Say, is it baſeneſs, to decline the foe?
Hard conflict! when calamity and age
With vig'rous youth, unknown to cares, engage!
Yet fearful of diſgrace, to try the day
Imperious hunger bids, and I obey;
But ſwear, impartial arbiters of right,
Swear to ſtand neutral, while we cope in fight.
The peers aſſent: when ſtraight his ſacred head
Telemachus uprais'd, and ſternly ſaid.
Stranger, if prompted to chaſtiſe the wrong
Of this bold inſolent; confide, be ſtrong!
Th' injurious Greek that dares attempt a blow,
That inſtant makes Telemachus his foe;

v. 64. *But ſwear, impartial arbiters of right,*
Swear to ſtand neutral, while we cope in fight.]

This is a very neceſſary precaution: Ulyſſes has reaſon to apprehend that the ſuitors would intereſt themſelves in the cauſe of Irus, who was their daily attendant, rather than in that of a perfect ſtranger. Homer takes care to point out the prudence of Ulyſſes upon every emergence: beſides, he raiſes this fray between two beggars into ſome dignity, by requiring the ſanction of an oath to regulate the laws of the combat. It is the ſame ſolemnity uſed in the Iliad between Paris and Menelaus, and repreſents theſe combatants engaging with the formality of two herbes.

And theſe my friends * ſhall guard the ſacred ties
Of hoſpitality, for they are wiſe.
Then girding his ſtrong loins, the king prepares
To cloſe in combat, and his body bares;
Broad ſpread his ſhoulders, and his nervous thighs
By juſt degrees, like well-turn'd columns, riſe:
Ample his cheſt, his arms are round and long,
And each ſtrong joint Minerva knits more ſtrong,
(Attendant oñ her chief:) the ſuitor-crowd
With wonder gaze, and gazing ſpeak aloud;
Irus! alas! ſhall Irus be no more,
Black fate impends, and this th' avenging hour!

v. 72. *And theſe my friends ſhall guard the ſacred ties*
Of hoſpitality, for they are wiſe.[

When Telemachus ſpeaks theſe words, he is to be ſuppoſed to turn to Eurymachus and Antinous, to whom he directs his diſcourſe. It muſt be allowed that this is an artful piece of flattery in Telemachus, and he makes uſe of it to engage theſe two princes, who were the chief of the ſuitors, on his ſide.

v. 82. *Irus, alas! ſhall Irus be no more.*] This is literally tranſlated: I confeſs I wiſh Homer had omitted theſe little colluſions of words: he ſports with Ἶρος ἄιρος. It is a low conceit, alluding to the derivation of Irus, and means that he ſhall never more be a *meſſenger*. The tranſlation, though it be verbal, yet it is free from ambiguity, and the joke concealed in ἄιρος; this will be evident, if we ſubſtitute another name in the place of Irus: we may ſay Achilles ſhall be no longer Achilles, without deſcending from the gravity of epick poetry.

* Antinous and Eurymachus.

Gods! how his nerves a matchleſs ſtrength proclaim:
Swell o'er his well-ſtrung limbs, and brace his frame!
Then pale with fears, and ſick'ning at the ſight,
They dragg'd th' unwilling Irus to the fight;
From his blank viſage fled the coward blood,
And his fleſh trembled as aghaſt he ſtood:

O that ſuch baſeneſs ſhould diſgrace the light!
O hide it, death, in everlaſting night!
(Exclaims Antinous) can a vig'rous foe
Meanly decline to combat age and woe?
But hear me, wretch! if recreant in the fray,
That huge bulk yield this ill-conteſted day:

v. 90. *O! that ſuch baſeneſs ſhould diſgrace the light! Oh! hide it, death,* &c.]

Euſtathius gives us an inſtance of the deep penetration of ſome criticks, in their comments upon theſe words: they have found in them the philoſophy of Pythagoras, and the tranſmigration of ſouls. The verſe ſtands thus in Homer;

Νῦν μὲν μήτ' εἶης βυγαῖε, μήτε γένοιο:

which they imagine is to be underſtood after this manner; *I wiſh thou hadſt never been born! and mayſt thou never exiſt again, or have a ſecond being!* To recite ſuch an abſurdity is to refute it. The verſe when literally rendered bears this import; *I wiſh thou wert now dead, or hadſt never been born!* an imprecation very natural to perſons in anger, who ſeldom give themſelves time to ſpeak with profound alluſions to philoſophy.

Inſtant thou ſail'ſt, to Echetus reſign'd;
A tyrant, fierceſt of the tyrant-kind,
Who caſts thy mangled ears and noſe a prey
To hungry dogs, and lops the man away.
While with indignant ſcorn he ſternly ſpoke,
In ev'ry joint the trembling Irus ſhook;
Now front to front each frowning champion ſtands,
And poiſes high in air his adverſe hands.
The chief yet doubts, or to the ſhades below
To fell the giant at one vengeful blow,

v. 96. *Inſtant thou ſail'ſt, to Echetus reſign'd;*
A tyrant, fierceſt of the tyrant-kind.]

The tradition concerning Echetus ſtands thus: he was king of Epirus, the ſon of Euchenor and Phlogea: he had a daughter called Metopè, or as others affirm, Amphiſſa; ſhe being corrupted by Æchmodicus, Echetus put out her eyes, and condemned her to grind pieces of iron made in the reſemblance of corn; and told her ſhe ſhould recover her ſight when ſhe had ground the iron into flour. He invited Æchmodicus to an entertainment, and cut off the extremities from all parts of his body, and caſt them to the dogs; at length being ſeized with madneſs, he fed upon his own fleſh, and died. This hiſtory is confirmed, lib. iv. of Apollonius,

Ὑβριστὴς Ἐχέτω γλήναις ἔνι χάλκεα κέντρα
Πῆξε δυσατρεκὲς ἔσσυτι δὲ κάρφεται ὄτῳ.
Ὀφθαλμὼ ἐνὶ χαλκὸν ἀλετρεύουσα καλιῇ.

I wonder how this laſt quotation eſcaped the diligence of Euſtathius. Dacier affirms, that no mention is made of Echetus by any of the Greek hiſtorians, and therefore ſhe has recourſe to another tradition, preſerved by Euſta-

Or ſave his life; and ſoon his life to ſave
The king reſolves, for mercy ſways the brave.
That inſtant Irus his huge arm extends,
Full on the ſhoulder the rude weight deſcends;
The ſage Ulyſſes, fearful to diſcloſe
The hero latent in the man of woes,
Check'd half his might; yet riſing to the ſtroke,
His jaw-bone daſh'd, the craſhing jaw-bone broke:
Down dropp'd he ſtupid from the ſtunning wound;
His feet extended, quiv'ring beat the ground;
His mouth and noſtrils ſpout a purple flood;
His teeth, all ſhatter'd, ruſh inmix'd with blood.
The peers tranſported, as outſtretch'd he lies,
With burſts of laughter rend the vaulted ſkies;
Then dragg'd along, all bleeding from the wound,
His length of carcaſs trailing prints the ground;
Rais'd on his feet, again he reels, he falls,
'Till propp'd, reclining on the palace walls;
Then to his hand a ſtaff the victor gave,
And thus with juſt reproach addreſs'd the ſlave.
There terrible, affright the dogs, and reign
A dreaded tyrant o'er the beſtial train!
But mercy to the poor and ſtranger ſhow,
Leſt Heav'n in vengeance ſend ſome mightier woe.

thius, who tells us, that Echetus was contemporary with Homer, that the poet had been ill uſed by him, and therefore took this revenge for his inhumanity.

Scornful he ſpoke, and o'er his ſhoulder flung
The broad patch'd ſcrip; the ſcrip in tatters hung
Ill-join'd, and knotted to a twiſted thong.
Then, turning ſhort, diſdain'd a further ſtay;
But to the palace meaſur'd back the way.
There as he reſted, gathering in a ring
The peers with ſmiles addreſt their unknown king:
Stranger, may Jove and all th' aereal Pow'rs,
With ev'ry bleſſing crown thy happy hours?
Our freedom to thy proweſs'd arm we owe
From bold intruſion of thy coward foe;
Inſtant the flying ſail the ſlave ſhall wing
To Echetus, the monſter of a king.
While pleas'd he hears, Antinous bears the food,
A kid's well fatted entrails, rich with blood:
The bread from caniſters of ſhining mold
Amphinous; and wines that laugh in gold:
And oh! (he mildly cries) may Heav'n diſplay
A beam of glory o'er thy future day!

v. 140. *From bold intruſion of thy coward foe.*] The word in the Greek is ἄναλτον. Γάςερα ἄναλτον is *a voracious appetite: a ſtomach that nothing can ſatisfy:* Heſychius thus explains it; ἄναλτον ἀναυξές, τῦτ' ἐςὶν ἰκανὸν, ἢ ἀπλήρωτον παρὰ τὴν ἅλσιν. But there is undoubtedly an error in Heſychius; inſtead of ἰκανὸν we ſhould read ἰσχνὸν, that is *meager*, or a *ſtomach that appears always unfilled.* The general moral that we are to gather from the behaviour of Ulyſſes and Irus, is that inſolence and boaſting are ſigns of cowardice.

Alas, the brave too oft is doom'd to bear
The gripes of poverty, and ſtings of care.
To whom with thought mature the king replies:
The tongue ſpeaks wiſely, when the ſoul is wiſe;
Such was thy father! in imperial ſtate,
Great without vice, that oft attends the great:
Nor from the ſire art thou, the ſon, declin'd;
Then hear my words, and grave them in thy mind!

v. 156. *Then hear my words, and grave them in thy mind!*] There never was a finer lecture of morality read in any of the ſchools of the philoſophers, than this which Ulyſſes delivers to Amphinomus; he uſhers it in with great ſolemnity, and ſpeaks to all mankind in the perſon of Amphinomus. It is quoted by a variety of authors: Pliny in his preface to his Natural Hiſtory, lib. 7. has wrote a diſſertation on this ſentence.

Of all that breathes, or grov'ling creeps on earth,
Moſt vain is man, &c.

Ariſtotle and Maximus Tyrius quote it; and Plutarch twice refers to it. Homer conſiders man both with reſpect to the errors of the mind, and the calamities incident to the body: and upon a review of all mortal creatures, he attributes to man the unhappy ſuperiority of miſeries. But indeed Homer is ſo plain that he needs no interpretation, and any words but his own muſt diſgrace him. Beſides, this ſpeech is beautiful in another view, and excellently ſets forth the forgiving temper of Ulyſſes; he ſaw that all the ſparks of virtue and humanity were not extinguiſhed in Amphinomus; he therefore warns him with great ſolemnity to forſake the ſuitors; he imprints conviction upon his mind, though ineffectually,

Of all that breathes, or grov'ling creeps on earth,
Moſt vain is man! calamitous by birth;
To-day with pow'r elate, in ſtrength he blooms;
The haughty creature on that pow'r preſumes:
Anon from Heav'n a ſad reverſe he feels;
Untaught to bear, 'gainſt Heav'n the wretch rebels.
For man is changeful, as his bliſs or woe;
Too high when proſp'rous, when diſtreſt too low.

and ſhews by it, that when he falls by the hand of Ulyſſes in the ſucceeding parts of the Odyſſey, his death is not a revenge but a puniſhment.

v. 163. *For man is changeful, as his bliſs or woe.*] Moſt of the interpreters have greatly miſrepreſented theſe words,

Τοῖος γὰρ νόος ἐστὶν ἐπιχθονίων ἀνθρώπων
Οἷον ἐπ' ἦμαρ ἄγῃσι.

They thus tranſlate it, *talis mens hominum, qualem Deus ſuggerit*; or, "Such is the mind of man, as Heav'n in-"ſpires:" but this is an error, for οἷον cannot refer to νόος, but to ἦμαρ, and the ſentence is thus to be rendered, *Talis mens hominum, qualem diem Deus inducit*; that is, "The mind of man changes with the complexion of "the day, as Heav'n ſends happineſs or miſery:" or as in the tranſlation,

For man is changeful, as his bliſs or woe;
Too high when proſp'rous, when diſtreſs'd too low.

The reader will be convinced that the conſtruction requires this ſenſe, by joining the prepoſition with the verb, ἐπὶ with ἄγῃσι, and rendering it, οἷον ἦμαρ ἐπάγῃσι; nothing being more frequent than ſuch a diviſion of the prepoſi-

There was a day, when with the ſcornful great
I ſwell'd in pomp and arrogance of ſtate;
Proud of the pow'r that to high birth belongs;
And us'd that pow'r to juſtify my wrongs.
Then let not man be proud; but firm of mind,
Bear the beſt humbly, and the worſt reſign'd;
Be dumb when Heav'n afflicts! unlike yon train
Of haughty ſpoilers, inſolently vain;
Who make their queen and all her wealth a prey;
But vengeance and Ulyſſes wing their way.
O may'ſt thou, favour'd by ſome guardian Pow'r,
Far, far be diſtant in that deathful hour!
For ſure I am, if ſtern Ulyſſes breathe,
Theſe lawleſs riots end in blood and death.
Then to the Gods the roſy juice he pours,
And the drain'd goblet to the chief reſtores.
Stung to the ſoul, o'ercaſt with holy dread,
He ſhook the graceful honours of his head;
His boding mind the future woe foreſtalls;
In vain! by great Telemachus he falls,
For Pallas ſeals his doom: all ſad he turns
To join the peers; reſumes his throne, and mourns.

tion from the verb amongſt the Greeks. It muſt be allowed, that Homer gives a very unhappy, yet too juſt a picture, of human nature: man is too apt to be proud and inſolent in proſperity, and mean and abject in adverſity; and thoſe men who are moſt overbearing in an happy ſtate, are always moſt baſe and mean in the day of affliction.

Meanwhile Minerva with inſtinctive fires
Thy ſoul, Penelope, from Heav'n inſpires:
With flatt'ring hopes the ſuitors to betray,
And ſeem to meet, yet fly, the bridal day:
Thy huſband's wonder, and thy ſon's, to raiſe;
And crown the mother and the wife with praiſe.

v. 189. *With flatt'ring hopes the ſuitors to betray.*] The Greek is very conciſe, and the expreſſion uncommon, ὅπως πεπάσειε θυμὸν μνηστήρων; that is, Penelope thus acted that ſhe might *dilate the heart of the ſuitors*; meaning (as Euſtathius obſerves) that ſhe might give them falſe hopes by appearing in their company; for the heart ſhrinks, and is contracted by ſorrow and deſpair, and is again dilated by hope or joy: this is I believe literally true, the ſpirits flow briſkly when we are in joy, and a new pulſe is given to the blood, which neceſſarily muſt dilate the heart: on the contrary, when we are in ſorrow the ſpirits are languid, and the blood moves leſs actively; and therefore the heart ſhrinks and contracts, the blood wanting vigour to dilate and expand it.

v. 191. *Thy huſband's wonder, and thy ſon's, to raiſe*] This is ſolely the act of Minerva, for Penelope is ignorant that ſhe is to appear before her huſband. This interview is excellently managed by Homer: Ulyſſes is to be convinced of his wife's fidelity; to bring this about, he introduces her upon the publick ſtage, where her huſband ſtands as a common unconcerned ſpectator, and hears her expreſs her love for him in the warmeſt terms; here is no room for art or deſign, becauſe ſhe is ignorant that ſhe ſpeaks before Ulyſſes; and therefore her words muſt be ſuppoſed to proceed from the heart. This gives us a reaſon why Homer makes her dwell at large upon her paſſion for Ulyſſes, and paint in the ſtrongeſt co-

Then, while the ſtreaming ſorrow dims her eyes,
Thus with a tranſient ſmile the matron cries:
Eurynomè! to go where riot reigns
I feel an impulſe, though my ſoul diſdains;

lours, viz. to evidence her chaſtity, and urge Ulyſſes to haſten the deſtruction of the ſuitors, by convincing him that ſhe is able no longer to elude the marriage hour. But then it may be objected, if Penelope's ſole deſign was to give a falſe hope to the ſuitors, does ſhe not take a very wrong method, by ſpeaking ſo very tenderly of Ulyſſes? is not this a more probable reaſon for deſpair than hope? It is true, it would have been ſo, if in the concluſion of her ſpeech ſhe had not artfully added,

But when my ſon grows man, the royal ſway
Reſign, and happy be thy bridal day!

So that Telemachus being grown up to maturity, the ſuitors concluded that the nuptial hour was at hand. If then we conſider the whole conduct of Penelope in this book, it muſt be allowed to be very refined and artful; ſhe obſerves a due regard towards Ulyſſes, by ſhewing ſhe is not to be perſuaded to marry: and yet by the ſame words ſhe gives the ſuitors hopes that the day is almoſt come when ſhe intends to celebrate her nuptials; ſhe manages ſo dexterouſly as to perſuade without a promiſe; and for this reaſon the words are put into the mouth of Ulyſſes, and it is Ulyſſes who gives the hopes, rather than Penelope.

v. 193. *Then, while the ſtreaming ſorrow dims her eyes,*
Thus with a tranſient ſmile the matron cries.]

Homer gives us a very beautiful and juſt image in theſe words. In the Iliad he uſed a ſimilar expreſſion concerning Andromache, δακρύοιν γελάσασα; *A ſmile chaſtis'd with tears.* Αχνύοιν δ' ἰγέλασσεν here bears the ſame import.

To my lov'd ſon the ſnares of death to ſhow,
And in the traitor-friend unmaſk the foe;
Who ſmooth of tongue, in purpoſe inſincere,
Hides fraud in ſmiles, while death is ambuſh'd there.

Go warn thy ſon, nor be the warning vain,
(Reply'd the ſageſt of the royal train)
But bath'd, anointed, and adorn'd deſcend;
Pow'rful of charms, bid ev'ry grace attend;
The tide of flowing tears a-while ſuppreſs;
Tears but indulge the ſorrow, not repreſs.
Some joy remains: to thee a ſon is giv'n,
Such as in fondneſs parents aſk of Heav'n.

v. 207. ——— *To thee a ſon is giv'n,*
Such as in fondneſs parents aſk of Heav'n.]

I am not certain that this is the exact ſenſe of Homer; Dacier underſtands him very differently. Eurynomè (obſerves that author) is not endeavouring to comfort Penelope becauſe her ſon is now come to years of maturity; her purpoſe is, to ſhew the neceſſity ſhe has to have recourſe to art, to aſſiſt her beauty: for (adds ſhe) your ſon is grown a man; meaning that a lady who has a ſon twenty years old, muſt have loſt her natural beauty, and has occaſion to be obliged to art to give her an artificial one. This, I confeſs, is too true, but it ſeems a little too ludicrous for epick poetry; I have followed a different ſenſe, that gives us a far nobler image; conformable to that verſe of Horace.

" Quid voveat dulcî nutricula majus alumno,
" Quam ſapere, &c."

Ah me! forbear, returns the queen, forbear,
Oh! talk not, talk not of vain beauty's care;
No more I bathe, ſince he no longer ſees
Thoſe charms, for whom alone I wiſh to pleaſe.
The day that bore Ulyſſes from this coaſt,
Blaſted the little bloom theſe cheeks could boaſt.
But inſtant bid Autonoè deſcend,
Inſtant Hippodamè our ſteps attend;
Ill ſuits it female virtue, to be ſeen
Alone, indecent, in the walks of men.
Then while Eurynomè the mandate bears,
From heav'n Minerva ſhoots with guardian cares;
O'er all her ſenſes, as the couch ſhe preſt,
She pours a pleaſing, deep, and death-like reſt,
With ev'ry beauty ev'ry feature arms,
Bids her cheeks glow, and lights up all her charms,
In her love-darting eyes awakes the fires,
(Immortal gifts! to kindle ſoft deſires)
From limb to limb an air majeſtick ſheds,
And the pure iv'ry o'er her boſom ſpreads.

This agrees with the tenour of Euryclea's ſpeech, and is a foundation of great comfort to Penelope.

v. 221. *O'er all her ſenſes, as the couch ſhe preſt,*
She pours a pleaſing, deep, and death-like reſt.]

This is an admirable ſtroke of art, to ſhew the determined reſolution of Penelope, to forbear the endeavour of making her perſon agreeable in any eyes but thoſe of Ulyſſes: a goddeſs is obliged to caſt her into an involuntary repoſe, and to ſupply an adventitious grace while ſhe ſleeps.

Such Venus ſhines, when with a meaſur'd bound
She ſmoothly gliding ſwims th' harmonious round,
When with the Graces in the dance ſhe moves,
And fires the gazing Gods with ardent loves.

Then to the ſkies her flight Minerva bends,
And to the queen the damſel-train deſcends:
Wak'd at their ſteps, her flowing eyes uncloſe;
The tear ſhe wipes, and thus renews her woes.

Howe'er 'tis well; that ſleep a-while can free
With ſoft forgetfulneſs, a wretch like me;
Oh! were it giv'n to yield this tranſient breath,
Send, oh! Diana, ſend the ſleep of death!
Why muſt I waſte a tedious life in tears,
Nor bury in the ſilent grave my cares?

v. 233. *Then to the ſkies her flight Minerva bends.*] We ſee Penelope is a woman of ſo much wiſdom, as to be the favourite of Minerva. She acts in every point with the higheſt diſcretion, and is inconſolable for her huſband; yet the poet forbears to let her into the ſecret that Ulyſſes is returned: this is undoubtedly an intended ſatire, and Homer means, that a woman in every point diſcreet, is ſtill to be ſuſpected of loquacity: this ſeems to have been the real ſentiment of Homer, which he more fully declares in the eleventh Odyſſey.

When earneſt to explore thy ſecret breaſt,
Unfold ſome trifle, but conceal the reſt;
For ſince of woman-kind ſo few are juſt,
Think all are falſe, nor ev'n the faithful truſt.

O my Ulyſſes! ever honour'd name!
For thee I mourn, till death diſſolves my frame.
Thus wailing, ſlow and ſadly ſhe deſcends,
On either hand a damſel-train attends:
Full where the dome its ſhining valves expands,
Radiant before the gazing peers ſhe ſtands;
A vail tranſlucent o'er her brow diſplay'd,
Her beauty ſeems, and only ſeems, to ſhade:
Sudden ſhe lightens in their dazled eyes,
And ſudden flames in ev'ry boſom riſe;
They ſend their eager ſouls with ev'ry look,
'Till ſilence thus th' imperial matron broke:
O why! my ſon, why now no more appears
That warmth of ſoul that urg'd thy younger years?
Thy riper days no growing worth impart,
A man in ſtature, ſtill a boy in heart!
Thy well-knit frame unprofitably ſtrong,
Speaks thee an hero from an hero ſprung:
But the juſt Gods in vain thoſe gifts beſtow,
O wiſe alone in form, and brave in ſhow!
Heav'ns! could a ſtranger feel oppreſſion's hand
Beneath thy roof, and could'ſt thou tamely ſtand?
If thou the ſtranger's righteous cauſe decline,
His is the ſuff'rance, but the ſhame is thine.
To whom with filial awe, the prince returns:
That gen'rous ſoul with juſt reſentment burns,
Yet taught by time, my heart has learn'd to glow,
For others good, and melt at others woe:

But impotent theſe riots to repel,
I bear their outrage, tho' my ſoul rebel:
Helpleſs amid the ſnares of death I tread,
And numbers leagu'd in impious union dread;
But now no crime is theirs: this wrong proceeds
From Irus, and the guilty Irus bleeds.
O would to Jove! or her whoſe arms diſplay
The ſhield of Jove, or him who rules the day!
That yon' proud ſuitors, who licentious tread
Theſe courts, within theſe courts like Irus bled:
Whoſe looſe head tott'ring, as with wine oppreſt,
Obliquely drops, and nodding knocks his breaſt;
Pow'rleſs to move, his ſtagg'ring feet deny
The coward wretch the privilege to fly.
Then to the queen Eurymachus replies;
O juſtly lov'd, and not more fair than wiſe!

v. 275. — — *this wrong proceeds*
From Irus, and the guilty Irus bleeds.]

Euſtathius informs us, that we are here to underſtand the fray between Irus and Ulyſſes. Penelope refers to the violence intended to be offered to Ulyſſes, when the foot-ſtool was thrown at him by Antinous; we find that ſhe was acquainted with that aſſault from her ſpeech in the preceding book. In reality, the queen was ignorant of the combat between Irus and Ulyſſes; but Telemachus miſunderſtands her with deſign, and makes an apology for the ſuitors, fearing to raiſe a further diſorder, or provoke them to ſome more violent act of reſentment.

Should Greece thro' all her hundred ſtates ſurvey
Thy finiſh'd charms, all Greece would own thy ſway,
In rival crouds conteſt the glorious prize,
Diſpeopling realms to gaze upon thy eyes:
O woman! lovelieſt of the lovely kind,
In body perfect, and compleat in mind!
Ah me! returns the queen, when from this ſhore
Ulyſſes ſail'd, then beauty was no more!
The Gods decreed theſe eyes no more ſhould keep
Their wonted grace, but only ſerve to weep.
Should he return, whate'er my beauties prove,
My virtues laſt; my brighteſt charm is love.

v. 288. —— *all Greece would own thy ſway*, &c.] Homer expreſſes Greece by Ἰάσιον Ἄργος Iäſian Argos. The word properly (as Euſtathius obſerves) denotes the Morea or Peloponneſus, ſo called from Iäſus the ſon of Argus, and Io king of that country; Strabo agrees with Euſtathius. Chapman wonderfully miſtakes Homer, and explains his own miſtake in a paraphraſe of ſix lines.

Moſt wiſe Icarius' daughter, if all thoſe
That did for Colchos vent'rous ſail diſpoſe,
For that rich purchaſe; had before but ſeen
Earth's richer prize, in th' Ithacenſian queen,
They had not made that voyage; but to you
Would all their virtues, all their beings vow.

I need not ſay how foreign this is to the original. In reality Argos with different epithets, ſignifies different countries; Ἀχαϊκὸν Ἄργος means Theſſaly, and Ἰάσιον Ἄργος Peloponneſus; but here it denotes Greece univerſally; for it would appear abſurd to tell Penelope, that all the

Now, grief, thou all art mine! the Gods o'ercaſt
My ſoul with woes, that long, ah long muſt laſt!
Too faithfully my heart retains the day
That ſadly tore my royal lord away:
He graſp'd my hand, and oh my ſpouſe! I leave
Thy arms, (he cry'd) perhaps to find a grave:
Fame ſpeaks the Trojans bold; they boaſt the ſkill
To give the feather'd arrow wings to kill,
To dart the ſpear, and guide the ruſhing car
With dreadful inroad thro' the walks of war.
My ſentence is gone forth, and 'tis decreed
Perhaps by righteous Heav'n that I muſt bleed!
My father, mother, all, I truſt to thee;
To them, to them transfer the love of me:
But when my ſon grows man, the royal ſway
Reſign, and happy be thy bridal day!

Morea would admire her beauty, this would leſſen the compliment; nor is any reaſon to be aſſigned why Peloponneſus ſhould admire her more than the reſt of the Greeks.

v. 313. *But when my ſon grows man, the royal ſway*
Reſign, and happy be thy bridal day.]

The original ſays, *reſign the palace to Telemachus*: this is ſpoken according to the cuſtoms of antiquity: the wife, upon her ſecond marriage, being obliged to reſign the houſe to the heir of the family. This circumſtance is inſerted with great judgment: the ſuitors were determined to ſeize it upon marriage with Penelope, as appears from the ſecond Odyſſey.

Such were his words; and Hymen now prepares
To light his torch, and give me up to cares;
Th' afflictive hand of wrathful Jove to bear:
A wretch the moſt compleat that breathes the air!
Fall'n ev'n below the rights to woman due!
Careleſs to pleaſe, with inſolence ye woo!
The gen'rous lovers, ſtudious to ſucceed,
Bid their whole herds and flocks in banquets bleed;

What mighty labours would he then create,
To ſeize his treaſures, and divide his ſtate,
The royal palace to the queen convey,
Or him ſhe bleſſes in the bridal day?

Penelope therefore by this declaration gives the ſuitors to underſtand, that the palace belonged not to her, but Telemachus. This aſſertion has a double effect; it is intended to make the ſuitors leſs warm in their addreſſes; or if they perſiſt, to ſet the injuſtice done to Telemachus in open view. The beauty of all the ſpeeches of Penelope in this book is ſo obvious that it needs no explanation; Homer gives her a very amiable character, ſhe is good in every relation of life, merciful to the poor and ſtranger, a tender mother, and an affectionate wife; every period is almoſt a lecture of morality.

My father, mother, all, I truſt to thee;
To them, to them transfer the love of me.

This ſhews the duty of the child to the parent; it may be extended to all perſons to whom we owe any duty; and humanity requires that we ſhould endeavour to eaſe the burthen of our friends in proportion to their calamities; we ſhould at all times conſult their happineſs, but chiefly in the hour of adverſity. A friend ſhould be a ſupport to lean upon in all our infirmities.

By precious gifts the vow ſincere diſplay:
You, only you, make her ye love your prey.
Well pleas'd Ulyſſes hears his queen deceive
The ſuitor-train, and raiſe a thirſt to give:

v. 323. *By precious gifts the vow ſincere diſplay:*
You, only you, make her lye love your prey.]

Horace, lib. ii. Sat. 5. makes a very ſevere reflection upon Penelope, and in her perſon (I ſay not how juſtly) upon the whole ſex: he gives the avarice of the ſuitors as the ſole reaſon of Penelope's chaſtity; and inſinuates that women would ſell their virtue, if men would be at the expence to buy.

"Venit enim magnum donandi parca juventus,
"Nec tantum Veneris, quantum ſtudioſa culinæ.
"Sic tibi Penelope frugi eſt: quæ ſi ſemel uno
"De ſene guſtarit, tecum partita lucellum;
"Ut canis, a corio numquam abſterrebitur uncto."

Horace had this paſſage in view, and imputes the coldneſs of Penelope to a want of generoſity in her admirers. Diodorus aſſures us, that Venus had a temple in Egypt dedicated to her under the title of χρυσῆ Ἀφροδίτη: or *golden Venus*; and it is her uſual epithet throughout all Homer. Near Memphis there was an allotment of ground called *the field of golden Venus*: but it ought not to be concealed, that ſome perſons believe ſhe bears that name from the golden colour of her hair. Horace, to give his ſatire the greater ſtrength, puts the words into the mouth of the prophet Tireſias, a perſon of unerring veracity.

v. 325. *Well-pleas'd Ulyſſes hears his queen deceive*
The ſuitor-train, and raiſe a thirſt to give.]

This conduct may appear ſomewhat extraordinary both in Penelope and Ulyſſes; ſhe not only takes, but aſks pre-

Falſe hopes ſhe kindles, but thoſe hopes betray,
And promiſe, yet elude the bridal day.

ſents from perſons whom ſhe never intends to marry: is not this a ſign either of avarice or falſhood? and is not Ulyſſes equally guilty, who rejoices at it? But in reality, Penelope is no way faulty; ſhe deceives the ſuitors with hopes of marriage by accepting theſe preſents, but it is for this ſole reaſon that ſhe accepts them; ſhe intends to give them falſe hopes, and by that method to defer the nuptial hour: it is not injuſtice, but an equitable repriſal; they had violently waſted her treaſures, and ſhe artfully recovers part of them by a piece of refined management. Dacier defends her after another method: ſhe believes that Penelope thus acts, not out of intereſt but honour; it was a diſgrace to ſo great a princeſs to have ſo many admirers, and never to receive from their hands ſuch preſents as cuſtom not only allows, but commands; neither is Ulyſſes blameable, who rejoices at his wife's policy. He underſtood her intent, and being artful himſelf, ſmiles to ſee her artfulneſs.

Plutarch in his treatiſe of reading poems, vindicates Ulyſſes very much in the ſame way: if (ſays that author) Ulyſſes rejoiced at Penelope's art in drawing preſents from the ſuitors out of avarice, he diſcovers himſelf to be a ſordid proſtitutor of his wife; but if through a wiſe foreſight he hoped by her acceptance of the preſents to get the ſuitors more into his power, by lulling them more into ſecurity, and laying all their ſuſpicions aſleep thro' a ſudden proſpect of marriage; if this occaſioned his joy, this joy ariſing from her artful management, and from a full confidence in his wife, is no ways blameable, but proceeds from a ſufficient and laudable cauſe. In ſhort, the ſuitors were enemies, and nothing could be practiſed diſhonourably againſt them, that either Ulyſſes or Penelope could act conſiſtently with their own honour.

While yet she speaks, the gay Antinous cries,
Offspring of kings, and more than woman wise!
'Tis right; 'tis man's prerogative to give,
And custom bids thee without shame receive;
Yet never, never, from thy dome we move,
'Till Hymen lights the torch of spousal love.
The peers dispatch their heralds to convey
The gifts of love; with speed they take the way.
A robe Antinous gives of shining dyes,
The varying hues in gay confusion rise
Rich from the artist's hand! twelve clasps of gold
Close to the less'ning waist the vest infold;
Down from the swelling loins the vest unbound
Floats in bright waves redundant o'er the ground.
A bracelet rich with gold, with amber gay,
That shot effulgence like the solar ray,

v. 327. *False hopes she kindles.*] It is certain that the words in the Greek will bear a double construction, and δίλγα θυμὸν μειλιχίοις ἐπέεσσι may refer either to Penelope or Ulysses. Eustathius thinks they are spoken of Ulysses; then the meaning is, that Ulysses comforted himself with her amusing words, while he formed a design very different from what her words expressed; but Dacier refers them to Penelope, perhaps with better reason: δίλγα depends upon φάτο in the preceding line; and by thus understanding it, the construction becomes easy and natural: and the sentence means, that Penelope's words flattered the suitors into hopes of marriage, while her thoughts were very distant from complying with their inclinations: this interpretation best agrees with the general design of Penelope, which was to act an artful part, and neither comply with, nor absolutely refuse their addresses.

Eurymachus preſents: and ear-rings bright,
With triple ſtars, that caſt a trembling light.
Piſander bears a necklace wrought with art;
And ev'ry peer, expreſſive of his heart,
A gift beſtows: this done, the queen aſcends,
And ſlow behind her damſel-train attends.

Then to the dance they form the vocal ſtrain,
'Till Heſperus leads forth the ſtarry train;
And now he raiſes, as the day-light fades,
His golden circlet in the deep'ning ſhades:
Three vaſes heap'd with copious fires diſplay
O'er all the palace a fictitious day;
From ſpace to ſpace the torch wide-beaming burns,
And ſprightly damſels trim the rays by turns.

v. 355. *Three vaſes heap'd with copious fires diſplay*
O'er all the palace a fictitious day.]

The word in the Greek is λαμπάδες, or a vaſe which was placed upon a tripod, upon which the antients burnt dry and oftentimes odoriferous wood, to give at once both perfume and light. Euſtathius explains it by χυτρόπους, or a veſſel raiſed on feet in the nature of an hearth. Heſychius explains λαμπωνίς, an hearth placed in the middle of the houſe or hall, on which they burnt dry wood with intermingled torches to enlighten it. It is ſtrange that there is no mention of lamps, but only torches, in Homer; undoubtedly lamps were not yet in uſe in Greece, although much earlier found out by the Hebrews: thus Exod. xxv. 6. oil is mentioned, and injoined to be uſed in giving light to the ſanctuary.

To whom the king: Ill ſuits your ſex to ſtay
Alone with men! ye modeſt maids, away!
Go, with the queen the ſpindle guide; or call
(The partners of her cares) the ſilver wool;
Be it my taſk the torches to ſupply,
Ev'n till the morning lamp adorns the ſky;
Ev'n till the morning, with unwearied care,
Sleepleſs I watch; for I have learn'd to bear.
Scornful they heard: Melantho, fair and young,
(Melantho, from the loins of Dolius ſprung,
Who with the queen her years an infant led,
With the ſoft fondneſs of a daughter bred)
Chiefly derides: regardleſs of the cares
Her queen endures, polluted joys ſhe ſhares
Nocturnal with Eurymachus! With eyes
That ſpeak diſdain, the wanton thus replies.
Oh! whither wanders thy diſtemper'd brain,
Thou bold intruder on a princely train?

v. 359. — — — *Ill ſuits your ſex to ſtay*
Alone with men! ye modeſt maids, away!]

Homer is perpetually giving us leſſons of decency and morality. It may be thought that this interlude between Ulyſſes and the damſels of Penelope is foreign to the action of the Odyſſey; but in reality it is far from it: the poet undertook to deſcribe the diſorders which the abſence of a prince occaſions in his family: this paſſage is an inſtance of it; and Homer with good judgment makes theſe wantons declare their contempt of Ulyſſes, and their favour to their ſuitors, that we may acknowledge the juſtice of their puniſhment in the ſubſequent parts of the Odyſſey.

Hence to the vag'rant's rendezvous repair;
Or ſhun in ſome black forge the midnight air.
Proceeds this boldneſs from a turn of ſoul,
Or flows licentious from the copious bowl?
Is it that vanquiſh'd Irus ſwells thy mind?
A foe may meet thee of a braver kind,

v. 377. *Hence to the vagrant's rendezvous repair;*
Or ſhun in ſome black forge the midnight air.]

I flatter myſelf that I have given the true ſenſe of χαλκήϊος δόμος, and λέσχη: in Greece the beggars in winter retired by night to publick forges for their warmth, or to ſome rendezvous where they entertained themſelves as it were in a common aſſembly. Euſtathius explains λεσχη to be *a publick place without any doors, where beggars were uſed to lodge.* Heſychius gives us ſeveral interpretations of the word, that it ſignifies an aſſembly, a converſation; it implies alſo publick ſtoves or baths; and Euſtathius informs us from Ariſtophanes, that beggars uſed to take up their lodgings in the public baths, as well as in theſe places mentioned by Homer; χαλκήϊος δόμος is an office of men that work in braſs. He further obſerves that theſe two places are uſed after the ſame manner in Heſiod.

Πὰρ δ' ἴθι χάλκειον θῶκον, ἠ ἐπ' ἀλέα λέσχην
Ὥρῃ χειμερίῃ, ὁπότε κρύος ἄνερας εἴργον
Ισχάνει.———

It may not be improper to obſerve, that πὰρ δ' ἴθι θῶκον χάλκειον is very ill tranſlated by *Accede æneam ſedem*, in the Latin verſion; it ſhould be *fuge officinam ærariam.*

v. 381. *Is it that vanquiſh'd Irus ſwells thy mind?*] The word in Homer is ἀλύης, which is uſed in various places; ſometimes (obſerves Plutarch in his treatiſe upon reading poems) it ſignifies *being diſquieted in mind,*

Ὣς ἔφατ' ἠ ἀλύεσσ' ἀπεδήσατο, τείρετο δ' αἰνῶς.

Who, ſhort'ning with a ſtorm of blows thy ſtay,
Shall ſend thee howling all in blood away!
To whom with frowns: O impudent in wrong!
Thy lord ſhall curb that inſolence of tongue;
Know to Telemachus I tell th' offence:
The ſcourge, the ſcourge ſhall laſh thee into ſenſe.
With conſcious ſhame they hear the ſtern rebuke,
Nor longer durſt ſuſtain the ſov'reign look.
Then to the ſervile taſk the monarch turns
His royal hands: each torch refulgent burns
With added day: meanwhile in muſeful mood,
Abſorpt in thought on vengeance fix'd he ſtood.
And now the martial Maid, by deeper wrongs
To rouſe Ulyſſes points the ſuitors tongues,

In other places it implies *an inſolent joy, or boaſting*; and then he quotes this verſe,

Ἦ ἀλύης ὅτι Ἶρον ἐνίκησας.

v. 395. *And now the martial Maid, by deeper wrongs*
To rouſe Ulyſſes points the ſuitors' tongues.]

It may be thought unjuſtifiable in Homer, to introduce Minerva exciting the ſuitors to violence. Dacier defends the poet by ſhewing that the ſentiment is conformable to true theology: and the all-wiſe Author of our being is pleaſed ſometimes to harden the hearts of the wicked, (or rather to permit them to harden their own hearts) that they may fill up the meaſure of their crimes, and be ripe for judgment: yet we are not to imagine, that any perſon is neceſſitated to be wicked: it is not the hardening the heart that originally makes men impious, but they are firſt impious, and then they are delivered over to an hardneſs of heart.

Scornful of age, to taunt the virtuous man;
Thoughtleſs and gay, Eurymachus began.
Hear me (he cries) confederates and friends!
Some God no doubt this ſtranger kindly ſends;
The ſhining baldneſs of his head ſurvey,
It aids our torch-light, and reflects the ray.—

But Homer may be juſtified another way; and Minerva may be underſtood to act thus in favour of Ulyſſes: the Goddeſs of Wiſdom infatuates the ſuitors to inſult that hero, and haſten their own deſtruction.

v. 400. *Some God no doubt, this ſtranger kindly ſends.*] Ariſtotle affirms that Homer is the father of poetry; not only of the epick, but alſo of the dramatick; that he taught how to write tragedy in the Iliad, and comedy by ſeveral ſhort ſketches in the Odyſſey. Euſtathius here remarks, that he likewiſe gave a model for ſatire, of which the Cyclops of Euripides ſtill extant is an example; (which is a ſatyrick poem founded upon the ſtory of Polypheme in Homer.) I confeſs my eye is not ſharp enough to ſee the dignity of theſe railleries; and it may be thought that Homer is the father of another kind of poetry, I mean the farce, and that theſe low conceits are no way to be juſtified, but by being put into the mouths of the ſuitors, perſons of no dignity or character. Longinus brings ſuch deſcriptions of the ſuitors, as inſtances of the decay of Homer's genius. When that declines (obſerves that author) poets commonly pleaſe themſelves with painting manners: ſuch is Homer's deſcription of the lives led by the ſuitors in the palace of Ulyſſes: for in reality all that deſcription is a kind of comedy, wherein the different characters of men are painted.

v. 401. *The ſhining baldneſs of his head ſurvey,*
It aids our torch-light, and reflects the ray.]

This in Dacier's judgment is a raillery purely ſatirical; it

Then to the king that levell'd haughty Troy.
Say, if large hire can tempt thee to employ
Thoſe hands in works; to tend the rural trade,
To dreſs the walk, and form th' embow'ring ſhade?
So food and raiment conſtant will I give:
But idly thus thy ſoul prefers to live,
And ſtarve by ſtrolling, not by work to thrive.
To whom incens'd: Should we, O prince, engage
In rival taſks beneath the burning rage
Of ſummer ſuns; were both conſtrain'd to wield,
Foodleſs, the ſcythe along the burthen'd field;

is drawn from the ſhining gloſs of an old man's bald head. But if this be purely ſatyrical, to be a ſatyriſt is to be a bad man: to rally natural infirmities is inhumanity: old age is venerable, and the bald head as well as the gray hair is an honour, and ought not to be the ſubject of raillery. I doubt not but Homer put it into the mouth of Eurymachus to make him more odious, and to ſhew us that the ſame man who invades his prince's property, inſults the ſtranger, and outrages the poor; pays no deference to old age, but is baſe enough to contemn what he ought to honour. Vice and folly are the province of ſatyr, not human infirmity.

v. 412. —— *were both conſtrain'd to weild,*
Foodleſs, the ſcythe along the burthen'd field.]

I doubt not but ſuch employments as theſe, now only ſuitable to low life, will ſeem mean to many readers, and unworthy of the dignity of epick poetry: it is no defence to ſay that they are mentioned by a beggar, and therefore agreeable to his character: the words are addreſſed to a prince, and ſuppoſe that a ſkill in ſuch works was not

Or ſhould we labour, while the ploughſhare wounds,
With ſteers of equal ſtrength, th' allotted grounds:

unuſual to perſons of eminent ſtations; otherwiſe the challenge of Ulyſſes is ridiculouſly abſurd. Who could forbear laughing, if he ſhould hear one of our beggars challenge a peer, to plough or mow with him all day without eating? The truth is, the greateſt perſons followed ſuch employments without any diminution of their dignities; nay a ſkill in ſuch works as agriculture was a glory even to a king: Homer here places it upon a level with military ſcience, and the knowledge of the cultivation of the ground is equalled to glory in war. In the preface to the paſtorals of Virgil, (but not written by Mr. Dryden) there is a paſſage that ſhews that the ſame ſimplicity of manners prevailed amongſt the antient Latins, as amongſt the antient Greeks: "It ought not, ſays that "author, to ſurpriſe a modern writer, that kings laid "down their firſt rudiments of government in ſtending "their mute ſubjects, their herds and flocks: nor ought "it to ſeem ſtrange that the maſter of the horſe to king "Latinus in the ninth Æneid was found in the homely "employment of cleaving blocks, when news of the firſt "ſkirmiſh between the Trojans and Latins was brought "to him." This paſſage fully vindicates Homer, and ſhews that ſuch employments were no diſhonour to the greateſt perſons; but there are two errours in the quotation; it is not taken from the ninth but the ſeventh Æneid; nor is Tyrrheus, who cleaves the blocks, maſter of the horſe to king Latinus, but the intendant of his flocks; or as Dryden tranſlates it,

Tyrrheus, chief ranger to the Latian king.

"—— Tyrrheuſque pater, cui regia parent
"Armenta, & latè cuſtodia credita campi."

Beneath my labours, how thy wond'ring eyes
Might ſee the ſable field at once ariſe!
Should Jove dire war unlooſe; with ſpear and ſhield,
And nodding helm, I tread th' enſanguin'd field,
Fierce in the van: then wou'dſt thou, wou'dſt thou,—ſay,—
Miſname me, glutton, in that glorious day?
No, thy ill-judging thoughts the brave diſgrace;
'Tis thou injurious art, not I am baſe.
Proud to ſeem brave among a coward train!
But know, thou art not valorous but vain.
Gods! ſhould the ſtern Ulyſſes riſe in might,
Theſe gates would ſeem too narrow for thy flight.

Tyrrheus is no otherwiſe a warriour, than as a deer under his charge, being killed, engages him in a quarrel, and he arms the ruſticks to encounter the Trojans who ſlew it.

" — — — vocat agmina Tyrrheus
Quadrifidam quercum cuneis ut forte coactis
Scindebat"——

Tyrrheus, the foſter-father of the beaſt,
Then clench'd an hatchet in his horny fiſt;
But held his hand from the deſcending ſtroke,
And left his wedge within the cloven oak.

It is true, though Tyrrheus was not maſter of the horſe to the king, yet his office was a poſt of dignity, otherwiſe it had been very eaſy for Virgil to have given him a more noble employment.

While yet he ſpeaks, Eurymachus replies,
With indignation flaſhing from his eyes.

Slave, I with juſtice might deſerve the wrong,
Should I not puniſh that opprobrious tongue,
Irrev'rent to the great, and uncontrol'd,
Art thou from wine, or innate folly, bold?
Perhaps, theſe outrages from Irus flow,
A worthleſs triumph o'er a worthleſs foe!

He ſaid, and with full force a footſtool threw:
Whirl'd from his arm with erring rage it flew;
Ulyſſes, cautious of the vengeful foe,
Stoops to the ground, and diſappoints the blow.
Not ſo a youth who deals the goblet round,
Full on his ſhoulder it inflicts a wound,
Daſh'd from his hand the ſounding goblet flies,
He ſhrieks, he reels, he falls, and breathleſs lies.

Then wild uproar and clamour mounts the ſky,
'Till mutual thus the peers indignant cry;
O had this ſtranger ſunk to realms beneath,
To the black realms of darkneſs and of death,
Ere yet he trod theſe ſhores! to ſtrife he draws
Peer againſt peer; and what the weighty cauſe?
A vagabond! for him the great deſtroy
In vile ignoble jars, the feaſt of joy.

To whom the ſtern Telemachus uproſe!
Gods! what wild folly from the goblet flows?
Whence this unguarded openneſs of ſoul,
But from the licence of the copious bowl?

Or heav'n deluſion ſends: but hence, away!
Force I forbear, and without force obey.

Silent, abaſh'd, they hear the ſtern rebuke,
'Till thus Amphinomus the ſilence broke.

True are his words, and he whom truth offends
Not with Telemachus, but truth contends;
Let not the hand of violence invade
The rev'rend ſtranger, or the ſpotleſs maid;
Retire we hence! but crown with roſy wine
The flowing goblet to the Pow'rs divine;
Guard he his gueſt beneath whoſe roof he ſtands,
This juſtice, this the ſocial rite demands.
The peers aſſent; the goblet Mulius crown'd
With purple juice, and bore in order round;

v. 457. *Force I forbear, and without force obey.*] This is very artful in Telemachus; he had ſpoken warmly in defence of Ulyſſes, and he apprehends leſt he ſhould have provoked the ſuitors too far; he therefore ſoftens his expreſſion, to avoid ſuſpicions of a latent cauſe, why he intereſts himſelf ſo vigorouſly in vindication of a beggar, againſt the princes of the country. Beſides, too obſtinate an oppoſition might have provoked the ſuitors to have continued all night in the palace, which would have hindered Ulyſſes and Telemachus from concerting their meaſures to bring about their deſtruction: Telemachus therefore, to induce them to withdraw, uſes menaces, but menaces approaching to perſuaſion: if he had uſed violence, matters muſt immediately have come to extremities.

Each peer ſucceſſive his libation pours
To the bleſt Gods that fill th' aereal bow'rs;

v. 470. *Each peer ſucceſſive his libation pours*
To the bleſt Gods———]

We have already obſerved that libations were made to the Gods before and after meals; here we ſee the ſuitors offer their libation before they retire to repoſe. We are not to aſcribe this religious act to the piety of theſe debauchees, but to the cuſtoms of the times; they practiſe not true religion, but only the exteriors of it; they are not pious, but faſhionable.

The action of this book is comprehended in a very ſhort duration of time; it begins towards the cloſe of the day, and ends at the time when the ſuitors withdraw to repoſe; this is the evening and part of the night of the thirty ninth day.

In general, this book is in the Greek very beautiful: the combat between Irus and Ulyſſes is naturally deſcribed; it is indeed between beggars, but yet not without dignity, it being almoſt of the ſame nature with the ſingle combats practiſed amongſt heroes in their moſt ſolemn games; as is evident from that in the Iliad, at the funeral of Patroclus. I could wiſh Homer had not condeſcended to thoſe low jeſts and mean railleries towards the concluſion: it is true, they are not without effect, as they agree with the characters of the ſuitors, and make Ulyſſes a ſpectator of the diſorders of his own family, and provoke him to a ſpeedy vengeance: but might not more ſerious provocations have been found out, ſuch as might become the gravity and majeſty of epick poetry? or if gaiety was eſſential to his characters, are quibples ſo too? Theſe may be thought to be of the ſame le-

Then ſwill'd with wine, with noiſe the crowds obey,
And ruſhing forth tumultuous, reel away.

vel with thoſe conceits which Milton puts into the mouth of the devil, and which diſgrace his poem. But the dignity, the tenderneſs, and juſtneſs of the ſentiments, in all the ſpeeches of Penelope, more than atone for the low railleries of Eurymachus.

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.

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